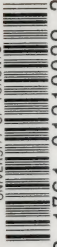


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GOTHENBURG STUDIES IN ENGLISH. V

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1

A MIDDLE ENGLISH
METRICAL PARAPHRASE
OF
THE OLD TESTAMENT

II

EDITED

BY

URBAN OHLANDER



ALMQVIST & WIKSELL

STOCKHOLM

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887274

GÖTEBORG
ELANDERS BOKTRYCKERI AKTIEBOLAG
1955

To My Wife



~~887274~~

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PREFACE

In publishing this work I wish to express my sincere thanks to Dr. Herbert Kalén, the editor of the first part of the text, for the confidence he has shown in entrusting its further editing to me.

I should also like to thank Mr. Charles Barber, M. A. Cantab., for his kindness in revising my English and assisting me with the proof-reading.

U. O.

INTRODUCTION

The first 500 stanzas of *A Middle English Metrical Paraphrase of the Old Testament* were published by Dr. Herbert Kalén in 1923, Göteborgs Högskolas Årsskrift XXVIII: 5. It was Dr. Kalén's original intention to publish the rest of the text in the not too distant future, but he was prevented from doing so by the pressure of other duties. The work was then entrusted to me. The following 302 stanzas are now printed, bringing the story up to the conclusion of the poem's Second Book of Kings, corresponding roughly to what is now usually called the Second Book of Samuel. The final episode of the part here published, the death of David, is found in the second chapter of the book commonly known as the First Book of Kings.

Kalén's work not only contains the text itself as preserved in the two MSS., but also gives an exhaustive and reliable account of the phonology of the poem, based upon an investigation of the rhymes. The relation between the MSS. and the original as well as the relation between the MSS. themselves is examined. The dialect and date of the original are inquired into, as are also the dialects of the MSS. In conclusion some notes are added on the metre and the literary relations.

For the benefit of readers to whom the first part of the text is not available a brief summary of the principal facts may be given on the basis of Kalén's investigation.

The text, which is composed of 1531 twelve-lined stanzas, is preserved in two MSS.: *MS. Selden Supra 52* and *MS. Longleat 257*. The former seems to contain the complete poem apart from stanza 689, which is found in *L*. This latter MS. is far from complete.

Kalén, p. CLIX, dates the original at about 1400 or 1410. Neither of the MSS. is the author's own copy of the poem. As shown by Kalén, p. XXXIV, the two MSS. go back upon a common source other than the original. As regards the dialect of the original, Kalén, p. CLVIII, finds it »highly probable that the poem was written in the county of Yorkshire and more particularly in the West Riding». Kalén's assump-

tion is supported by J. P. Oakden, *Alliterative Poetry in Middle English*, Manchester, 1930, p. 126.

The date of *S* is put by Wells at the beginning of the 15th century. See Wells, *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English*, p. 398. Its dialect is on the whole northern, which means that the dialect of the original has in all essentials been preserved. But this MS. also contains dialectal influences which point to the (West) Midlands and Scotland. This is evidently the result of *S*, itself a copy, having passed through the hands of a West Midland and a Scottish scribe. Kalén also hints at the possibility of a scribe writing under the influence of London speech. He concludes, p. CLXVI: »At any rate we can state that no attempt has been made consistently to turn the original Northern dialect of the poem into the language of the Midland.»

L dates from 1420 or 1422 at the very earliest (Kalén, p. VI). In the first supplement to his *Manual*, p. 979, Wells dates it at c. 1450. In *L* we find a conscious attempt to transfer the author's dialect into a form more familiar to readers living south of the Humber, the dialectal alterations being more radical and systematic than in *S*. See Kalén, pp. XXV, XXXIV, CLXVI. This tendency is easily noticeable not only in the vocabulary, which has been submitted to a thorough recasting on Midland models, but also in the phonology. Though it is evident that *L* has gone through the hands of a Midland scribe, »the dialectal peculiarities are hardly of such a nature as to enable us to state more definitely to which part of the Midland this scribe belonged» (Kalén, p. CLXX).

Each stanza consists of 8 four-foot and 4 three-foot verses, rhyming ababababcded. The last four verses form the cauda of the stanza. The number of the syllables varies a little, especially the unstressed ones. The rhythm is iambic, but deviations from the strict iambic rhythm are frequently met with. Again, there are often clashes between the syntactical accent and the word-accent on the one hand and the metrical accent on the other. G. Stern, in his review of Kalén's work, does not quite agree with the latter as regards the metre. Certain metrical irregularities are regarded by Stern as due to an intentional effort of the author's to attain variety. See *Englische Studien*, 59, 1925, pp. 280—286. The alliteration of the poem links it up with other alliterative poems of the 14th and 15th centuries in the North and North-West of England. See Kalén, p. CLXXV ff.

Kalén does not claim to give an exhaustive account of the literary relations of the poem. He confines himself rather to suggesting on what lines subsequent investigation of this complex problem should be carried out. As the principal sources are mentioned the Bible and Peter Comestor's *Historia Scholastica*. Reference is also made to an anonymous French translation of the Old Testament, and several passages appear to be borrowed from the *York Plays*. Further parallels from texts dealing with Biblical subjects are brought forward by S. B. Liljegren, *Anglia Beiblatt*, 34, 1923, pp. 227—228.

Kalén follows the sound principle of altering the text as little as possible. The metrical criterion is not regarded as an infallible test. »The wording of the MS. has been strictly adhered to even in such cases where, most likely, it was not that of the author» (p. 2). The present editor has found no cause to adopt other editorial principles.

Primus Liber Regum.¹⁾

(MS. Selden Supra 52.)

fol. 57^a cont-
nued 501 þus with the kyng wonnand he was,
full well [b]e lufed with owtyⁿ wene.
Of prowes in all poyntes con he passe
ouer all þat on his eld hath beyne.
6005 Bot þe kynges sun, heygh Ionatas,
he lufed hym best of all be deyne.
hys hert all holly to hym he has,
and þat was oft sythis aftur seyne.
None wyst he was a noynt
6010 bot the prophett and hee
Tyll yt come to þe poynt
þat god sayd yt suld bee.

Jonathan, the king's son, loved David dearly. Nobody but the prophet and David himself knew as yet that he was anointed.

502 Soyne messyngers musters [þem] o mell,
of harms hard þei hard at hand:
6015 how þat phylysteyns, fers and fell,
dystroyd all þat þei be fore fand,
And how þei dyȝt þem forto dwell
tyll þei had wasted all ebrews land.
kyng saul herd þis tythyng tell,
6020 hys ost full sone he had ordand.
The chyld dauid he sentt
to soyiourne forsoth [in] lye.
To bethlem is he went
and keped his faders fye.

King Saul gathered his host to meet the Philistines. David was sent to Bethlechem to look after his father's cattle.

S 501. 2 he.

MS. Longleat 257. 501. 1 fol. 143 b continued / Thus was he wonnand with the kyng / 2 wele belufed withouten / 3 proves in poyntes gun he pas / 4 that of elde have bene / 5 the kyng sonne that high Ionathas / 6 beste / be dene / 7 His / hole / 8 that / sithes after sene / 9 Noone / anynt / 10 prophett / he / 11 To it / the / 12 that / said it shuld be / — 502. 1 Ca. xvij in left margin / Sone aftirward it befell / 2 harmes / they nere / 3 How that Philistiens / 4 destroyd / that before them they / 5 they dight theym / 6 to they / al / 7 kyng omitted / Saul sone / thes tithinges / 8 his oste / 9 child Dauid / sent / 10 soiourne for svrtee / 11 Bethleem / 12 fadre fee.

¹⁾ Heading and beginning on fol. 44 a, Kalén p. 132.

Saul saw his enemies,
 and he was surprised in
 confusion from a hill.
 He dared not attack
 them, for he knew full
 well that God was not
 against his friends.

- 503 kyng saul wold not rest to ryde, 6025
 ne sesse to he of þem had syȝt
 Under a banke, wher þei abyde,
 with baners spred, of brad full bryȝt;
 kyng saul on þe oþer syde, fol. 57 b
 þe hyll be twen, was on a grett heght. 6030
 So noþer towched oþer þat tyd.
 phylsteyns ware þe mo of myȝt.
 kyng saul wyst full well
 god was not fully his frend.
 þerfor he drede sum dele 6035
 agayns Enmys to wend.

The Hebrews had no-
 body who dared accept
 the challenge of Goliath,
 the Philistine champion,
 for fear of losing the
 land.

- 504 Phylsteyns ware þe feller þen
 for a grett freke þat þei furth fand.
 On golyas ylk day be gan
 vp on þat hegh hyll forto stand; 6040
 he bad Ebrews send furth a man
 to fyȝt with hym hand for hand,
 And wheder of þem so maystry wan
 suld haue þe lordschep of þat land.
 he was both grettur and grym 6045
 þen any man myȝt suppose.
 þer durst non dele with hym
 for dred þat land to lose.

Goliath was heavily
 armed, a grim fellow to
 meet. He proclaimed his
 challenge forty days and
 more.

- 505 hys armour was passand to prays, 6050
 and V hunderth on his hed he has.
 hys heyberke held of heuy pas
 VI C to wey with brase.
 In hys ax hede þat he suld rayse
 well sixty C weght þer was;
 And all of stele, þe story says, 6055
 and brygh glyterand as any glas.
 he was a gremly geyst
 in feld to fynd be fore.
 All way þis cowrse he kest
 full XL days and more. 6060

S 503. 1 wold above was cancelled / — 505. 7 ost cancelled before of.

L 503. 1 Kyng Saul / 2 cese / theym / a syght / 3 Vndre / bank / they gun /
 4 with many banners full bryght / 5 Saul / that othre / 6 the hill betwene / of
 grete hyght / 7 navthre / oþer wanting / that tyde / 8 Philistiens wer the more
 myght / 9 Saul / wele / 10 frende / 11 Therfore / dred / sumdele / 12 enmys /
 wende / — 504. 1 Philistiens wer the fellar then / 2 grete / that they / 3 Oon
 Goliath ych / began / 4 vpon that high hill / 6 fyght / ther hand to hand / 7
 whethre / theym the maistre / 8 shuld have the lordship / that / 9 both omitted /
 more grete / 10 than / myght / 11 Ther / noon / 12 þat / — 505. 1 His / 2 fyve
 hunderyth / hede / 3 his Abarion / hevy pays / 4 sex hunderith forto wegh / bras /
 5 In his / that / shuld rays / 6 wele / hunderith / there / 7 the / 8 and omitted /
 full bryght glitterand / 9 grymly gest / 10 felde / fynde before / 11 his cours / 12
 forty.

- 506 In þat seson was Dauid sent
to þe sege at see his breyþer hende.
he asked of men what he be ment
þat on þe hyl̄ alon can lend.
- 6065 And when þei told hym þer entent
and how none durst fyȝt with þat fend,
he sayd, »all grace fro god is lent;
vnto yond warlaw wyll I wend.»
hys breyþer can hym blame,
6070 and fro care hym to kepe
þei bad he suld hast hame
and fede þer fader schepe.

David went to see his brothers, who were in Saul's army. They blamed him for wanting to fight against Goliath and told him to go home.

- 507 The kyng herd tell of þis tythand,
he gart foche Dauid hym be fore.
- 6075 Sone he sayd, »to leue þis land
and lose þi lyf full lothe me ware.
þou hath no strength with hym to stand.»
and þus þe chyld answerd hym þore,
»My helpe ys h[o]ly in goddes hand,
6080 I wot his myȝt is mekyll more.
fol. 58 a all yf yond man be strang,
he lyuys not lafully.
In goddes name I sall gang
and fell hym sone for þi.»

The king too said to David that he had not strength enough for such a fight. But the child answered that with God's help he would fell the Philistine.

- 6085 508 when kyng saul saw for certayn
þat he wold found þat fend to fere,
he armyd hym at all peyssys playn
and ordand hym scheld and spere.
Bot þe chyld had no myȝt ne mayn
6090 swylke weght on his body to bere.
he sayd, »takes all þis geyre agayn;
I am not wunt swylke wed to were.
My slyng is nemyll enogh
and best dyffence for me.
6095 wyld bestes þer with I slogh,
þat flayd my fader fee.»

When King Saul saw that David was determined to fight against Goliath, he equipped him with armour, shield and spear. But the child, who could not carry such a weight, told them to take those things away. His sling was good enough.

S 507. 7 hely / — 508. 6 bere above the line.

L 506. 1 fol. 144 a / Regum primo in top margin / that season / 2 the / to / brethre / 3 He / bement / 4 that / the hill alloon gun lende / 5 they / their / 6 how omitted / noon / fyght / that fende / 7 He says / 8 your werlow wolle / wende / 9 His brethre gun / 11 They / shuld haste home / 12 their fadre / — 507. 1 this tithand / 2 made Dauid be broght hym before / 3 Sonne / this / 4 thy lyfe / loth / were / 5 Thou has noo strength / 6 thus the childe / there / 7 Myn / is holly / 8 wote / myght / myche / 9 All thogh yound / 10 lyves / lawfully / 11 shal / 12 forthy / — 508. 1 Saul / 2 that / goo that fende / 3 He armed / peces playne / 4 both shelde / 5 the childe / noo myght / mayne / 6 suche / his hede / 7 He / take / this gere agayne / 8 wount / such wede / 9 enogh / 10 defence / 11 therwith / 12 that / fadre.

David took his sling and cast stones that were deadly to his strength. Goliath called him a fool and told him to go home.

500 he toke his slyng *and* furth can found
 þat mawment yf he myȝt to marre.
 he geydderd stones apon þe ground,
 swylyk þat for his craft accordand were. 6100
 Goliath steyted in þat stound
and cald hym fole when he was fere.
 »Boy, hopys þou I be a hound?»
 Dauid sayd, »sertes, I hold þe werre.»
 Golyas says, »go hom,
 þou barn, *and* leue þi berre!
 þo folke þat [þou fro come]
 sall by þis dede full dere.» 6105

David swung the sling upon his head and hit Goliath in the brain. Then he struck off his head.

510 Dauid fast toke furth [his] slyng
and a ston þat þerfor was fyttē. 6110
 About his hed he can yt bryng,
 to tyme he saw wher yt suld sytt.
 he wated þe warlaw *with* a wryng
and made hym wode owt of hys wytt.
 ffor Armour or for oþer thyng 6115
 into þe harns he has hym hytt.
 ffor all þe lakes he ler[d]
 þe lyue þor he leued.
 Dauid *with* [his] awn sword
 swythyly swappēd of hys hed. 6120

The Philistines fled, pursued by Saul. There was great joy among the Jews when they heard how the heathens fled. Thirty thousand Philistines were slain. Then the Jews returned to their own country.

511 Phylysteyns herd þis note new;
 yf þei had noy ys not to hyde.
 ffull rasydly þei can remew
and reydyd þem to ryn *and* ryde.
 kyng saul prestly can persew 6125
and foled fast to fell þer pryde.
 þat day was joy to mony jew
 to here the hethyn how þei cryde.
 XXX milia war slayn
 of folke þat myȝt not flee. 6130
 þei turned þen home agayn
 into þer awn cuntre.

S 509. 11 fro con fall / — 510. 9 lernyd / — 511. 1 note of new.

L 509. 1 He take / gun / 2 that mawment if / myght / mar / 3 gedered stoonēs
 vpon the / 4 which / þat omitted / crafte accordyng ar / 5 stood there / that / 6
 called / foel / was fro hym fare / 7 hoppes thou / an / 8 said / the war / 9 said
 go home / 10 thou / leve thy bere / 11 The / that thou fro come / 12 shal / this / —
 510. 1 faste take / his / 2 ston that therfor / fyt / 3 Aboute / hede / covth it /
 4 it shuld hyt / 5 He wayted the / 6 woode oute / his wyt / 7 armour / othere / 8 the
 harnes / hym has ryt / 9 the lacys / lerre / 10 his lyfe there he leved / 11 his /
 swerde / 12 full swyth stroke / his heved / — 511. 1 Philistiens / thes tythandes
 new / 2 if they / noye is / 3 rasily then they gun / 4 hastēd theym / 5 Kyng Saul /
 gun pursew / 6 folowed / their / 7 That / ioy / many a Iew / 8 hathen / they / 9
 Thirty thovsaud ther was slayne / 10 that myght / fle / 11 Then turned they /
 agayne / 12 Into they.

fol. 58 b 512 with kyng saul was Dauid dere,
 for he had done þis doyghty[n]es].
 6135 And all þe folke, both ferre *and* nere,
 gaf hym þe þrice of þ[at] prowesse.
 So ose þei com by Cyteys sere,
 all welcomd þem, os worthy es,
 with mynstralsy and mere chere
 6140 of wyfes *and* maydyns, *more and* lesse.
 þo wyfes sang how saul slogh
 A thowssand with his hand;
 þe madyns sang *and* loghe,
 »Dauid slogh ten thowssand.»

David was dear to Saul because of his brave deed, and all the people praised him. Wives and maidens welcomed them singing that Saul had slain a thousand but David ten thousand.

6145 513 when saul herd, he was sory.
 wyfes sayd he sloght A thowsan playn,
 And maydyns made þer melody
 þat Dauid had ten thowsand slayn.
 Of þis be gan full grett enuy
 6150 *and* lasted lang, ys no[t] to layn.
 ffor in hys hert he thynkes [holy]
 how Samuel prophett sayd [certayn]
 [he] suld his lordschepe lose,
 for he brake goddes bydyng.
 6155 þis sang made hym suppose
 þat Dauid suld be kyng.

Saul became envious of David and thought of Samuel's prophecy that he would lose his kingship for breaking God's commandment. The song made him suspect that David would be king.

514 Bot he wold mare hym, [y]f he myȝt,
 þat he suld neuer þat fare fulfyll.
 6160 he saw, for þis werke he had wroyȝt,
 þat all men lufed hym lowd *and* styl. l.
 Sere sutelteys oft sythys he soyȝt
 how he myȝt sped hym forto spyll.
 Bot to hym self he wold say noyȝt;
 Ne dauid toke no tent þer tyll.
 6165 he provyd passand his eld
 of gud maners *and* myȝt.
 ffro he cowde wepyns weld,
 to were was non so wyght.

The king, seeing that everybody loved David, sought for subtle means of killing him, but David took no notice of it. He was beyond his years in good manners and skillful handling of weapons.

S 512. 2 doyghty dede / 4 þer prownesse / 10 handes / — 513. 7 hert here hent he / 9 hys / — 514. 1 of.

L 512. 1 Wyth / Saul / 2 doone this doyghtynes / 3 And omitted / All the / far / 4 gave / the / that prowes / 5 as they come / sithes / 6 welcomed them / as / is / 7 With mynstrelcy / mery / 8 madyns / les / 9 The / 10 a thousand / handes / 11 The / logh / 12 thowsandes / — 513. 1 When Saul / 2 said / slogh a thowsand playne / 3 madyns / their / 4 that / thowsand slayne / 5 this began / grete / 6 it noght to layne / 7 He thinks in hert inwardly / 8 the prophet / certayne / 9 fol. 144 b / He shuld / lordship / 10 godes byddyng / 11 This song / 12 that / shuld / — 514. 1 let it, and he myght / 2 that / shuld / that degre fullfyll / 3 He / this / that he / wroght / 4 þat omitted / both lovde / 5 suteltees / sithes / soght / 6 myght spede Dauid to / 7 selfe / noght inserted above the line / 8 ne Dauid tuke / no omitted / thertyll / 9 He proved / elde / 10 goode / myght / 11 covth wepens welde / 12 werre / noone.

Saul said pretended to be his friend while smothered his enemies. He conspired David to kill his army to war. So that the Philistines might kill him. But God was always with him.

- 515 kyng saul fayg[ed] hym with fayrhede
and wayted euer to werke hym wo. 6170
 he wyst well for hys doyghty dede
 þat phylysteyns ware hys foo.
 he ordand hym his ost to lede
 all way when þei to were suld goo.
 þat was noþer for lufe ne dred, 6175
 bot þat Phylysteyns suld hym slo.
 Bot god was euer hys gyde
 his werke forto warrand.
 wher he suld gang or ryde,
 gud hape was [i]n his hand. 6180

David was successful in every battle and sent all the wealth he won to the king. Everything that Saul did to harm David was turned by God to his honour. Jonathan defended him from the king's evil designs.

- 516 þen went Dauid with scheld *and spere*
and styfly stud in mony a stowre.
 phylysteyns was he fayn to fere,
 in ylka feld he bare þe flour.
 All [welthys] þat he wan with were fol. 59 a 6185
 he sent to saul for socour.
 And þat he dyd dauid to dere
 god turned yt to his grett honour.
 þe kyng ay waytand was
 how he myȝt werke hym wo, 6190
 Bot þe kynges sun, Ionatas,
 fendyd hym ay þer fro.

Jonathan and David loved each other like brothers. And Michal, Saul's daughter, had lost her heart to David. When he was depressed, nothing could make her glad. There was no better medicine for her than his comfort.

- 517 As breþer ware þei fast in fere
 aþer to beld os oþer bad.
 All folke þem lufed, both fere *and nere,* 6195
 in ylka sted wher þei ware sted.
 And mycoll, þe kynges doyghtur dere,
 Dauid hyr hert all holy hade.
 When he was moued to make yll chere,
 no myrth on mold myȝt make hyr glad. 6200
 And when þe pepyll hym plessed,
and scho hys conforth kend,
 yf oþer had hyr dys[pl]essyd,
 þat medcyn moght amend.

S 515. 1 fayg / 7 Mark of contraction for '-us' after for / 12 on / — 516. 5
 Hies jus Regum and Saul 'and' Dauid in upper margin / welth ys / — 517.
 8 glad above the line.

L 515. 1 Kyng Saul faged / fairhede / 2 purpuste / wyrke / woo / 3 He / wele /
 his doyghty / 4 þat omitted / all Philistiens were his / 5 He / oste / 6 allway / they
 / werre shuld / 7 That / navthre / drede / 8 þat omitted / for Philistiens shuld /
 sloo / 9 his / 10 warke / warand / 11 Where / shuld / 12 goode hap / in / — 516. 1
 Then / shelde / 2 styftly stooede / many / stoure / 3 Philistiens / fayne / 4 ych a
 felle / the floure / 5 welthes that / werre / 6 Saul / socoure / 7 Ca. xviiij in left
 margin / that / did Dauid / 8 it / grete honoure / 9 The / 10 myght wyrke / woo
 / 11 the kyng sonne Ionathas / 12 hym defended / — 517. 1 brethre they were /
 fast omitted / 2 aythre / belde as othre / 3 theym / far / 4 ych a stede / they were /
 5 mycol the / doghter / 6 hir / holly had / 7 moved / evyll / 8 noo / on mold wanting
 / myght / hire / 9 the people / pleased / 10 she his comforth / 11 If othre / hir
 displeased / 12 that medicine most myght.

- 6205 518 In luf þus lang was scho led,
 scho had [no] lykyng of hi[re] lyfe.
 When he in any stoure was sted,
 þen wa[s] hyr mynd in mekyll stryfe.
 Scho swere þat no wyȝt suld hyr wede,
 6210 bot scho [myȝt euer] be his wyfe.
 Scho had no beld at bowre ne bed;
 hyr care was kene as any knyfe.
 Scho changed hyde *and* hew,
 hyr fayrnes fast can fale.
 6215 At þe last þe kyng yt knew
and asked of his consaylle

So great was her love that she had no pleasure in life. She swore that no other man should ever marry her. Her beauty began to fade, and at last the king asked his council's advice.

- 519 [I]f þem toyȝt yt ware well to do
 to gyf his doȝȝhtur to dauid.
 And þei gafe consell all þerto:
 6220 »non is so kumly in þis kyth.
 A semly copyll is of þem two,
 for both ar large of lym *and* lyth.»
 [The kyng assented it shuld be so,
 bot this forward he fest therwyth:]
 6225 heydes of phylesteyns
 two hunderth suld he bryng.
 with þis ylk wyle he wenys
 Dauid suld make endyng.

The council advised the king to give his daughter to David in marriage. The king consented on condition that David should bring him the heads of two hundred Philistines. By this guile he hoped to get rid of David.

- 6230 520 ffull well he trawd by þis yll trayn
 Dauid to lose in lytyll stound,
 And or he had two hunderth slayn
 forto haue mony a wekyd wound.
 Bot Dauid of þa[t] fayr was fayn;
 he gatt felows with hym to found,
 6235 ffor Mycoll luf hym lyst not layn.
 Philysteyns fast he fell to þe ground.
 Two hunderth hedes certan
 ware neuynd to hym be name,
 Bot when he come agayn,
 6240 fyfe hunderth broȝt he hame.

Saul thought that David would shortly be killed. But David himself was glad to go and took some companions with him. When he came back, he brought five hundred heads instead of two hundred.

S 518. 2 his / 4 wad / 6 noȝt to / — 519. 1 Of / 2 to h cancelled before to gyf / — 520. 5 þar / 11 wh cancelled before when.

L 518. 1 thus / she / 2 she / noo / hire / 3 she / 4 then was hir / mych / 5 She sware that neuer wyght shuld hir wed / 6 bot if she myght be / 7 She / noo belde / bourd / 8 hir / 9 She changed hide / 10 hire fairnes / gun fall / 11 the last / þe omitted / it / 12 counsell / — 519. 1 If theym thocht it were / well wanting / doo / 2 gyve / doghter / Dauid / 3 they gave counsel / therto / 4 noo / comly / his / 5 semely cople / theym twoo / 7—8 = text above / 9 Heveds / Philistiens / 10 twoo hunderyth shuld / 11 With this / ylk omitted / wenes / 12 shuld / — 520. 1 Full wele / trowed / this / yll missing / trayne / 2 litle stounde / 3 twoo hunderyth slayne / 4 have / wiked wounde / 5 that fare / fayne / 6 gedered felays / founde / 7 mycol lufe / list / layne / 8 Philistiens / feld to grounde / 9 Twoo hunderyth heveds certayne / 10 wer nevynd / by / 11 agayne / 12 fyve hunderyth broght / home.

Everybody praised David and said that he was quite worthy of his reward. The marriage took place, but the king still entertained his evil designs on David's life. He failed in his purpose.

521 þen was he *praysed with man and* page fol. 59 b
 with sere solace þat to hym soyðt.
 þei sayd he was well worthy his wage
 for þis ylke warke þat he had wroyðt,
 þat so had sterd hym in þat stage. 6245
 fyue hunderth hedes *with hym* he broyðt.
 þe kyng þen made þe mayreg,
 bot euyl ay [was] in hys toyðt:
 Sere cawtels oft he cast
 Dauid to schame *and* schend.
 All turned to þe best, 6250
 for god was euer his frend.

The Philistines wanted to take revenge. Saul, on hearing this, commanded David to deal with them. He did so, with the aid of trustworthy companions, and gained a great victory with rich spoils.

522 Soyne aftur þis so yt fell:
 Phylsteyns, full of enuy,
 Dyðt þem *and* wold no langer dwell 6255
 to be venged of þer velany.
 when kyng saul herd tythyng tell
 þat enmys com In opynly,
 he demyd dauid *with* þem to mell,
 and als he [heyðt], he dyde in hye.
 ffelows þat wold not fayle 6260
 ar gladly *with* hym gone.
 þai vencusyd þe batele
 and gat gud full grett wone.

When Saul heard of David's exploits, he fell ill, afraid lest David should rule the land. The evil spirit came upon him, and David was sent for ostensibly to cheer him up with harping and singing.

523 þen *with* all folk was dauid dred 6265
 and hownerd for his dughty dede.
 when saul herd he had well sped,
 þen in his hert he had more drede.
 Down he fell seke in his bede,
 for ferd Dauid þat land suld lede.
 hys yl spret soyn hym spred; 6270
 no speciall spech myðt hym spe[d]e.
 Dauid was aftur sent
 by hym to harpe *and* syng
 And all to euyl entent
 in bale hym forto bryng. 6275

S 521. 5 ferd cancelled before sterd / 6 hendes hom / 7 þem altered to þen / — 522. 8 MS. dyd / — 523. 8 MS. to hym speke.

L 521. 1 Then / prased / 2 they / soght / 3 They / wele / 4 this / ylke omitted / that / wroght. Leaves 145—148 of MS. L lost, comprising 521:5—581:8.

524 Daudid hym dyȝt to do his dett:
 þe kyng fro wo yf he myȝt were.
 As he *with* harpe to syng was sett
 6280 þe fend fers so forto fere,
 The kyng hath cast his lake to lett;
withowtyn spech he spens a spere.
 To Daudid euy*n* he toke his mett
 thurgh þe body hym to bere.
 6285 þen Mycol kest a cry,
and Daudid turned hym soyne.
 ffast home he can hym hye.
 god wold noyȝth yt were doyne.

When David sat there singing in order to drive away the evil spirit, the king took a spear and aimed at him. But Michal uttered a cry of warning and David escaped.

6290 525 þe kyng was þen all wode for wo;
 þat he so scaped, hym toyȝt scorne.
 he bad wyȝt men be lyue suld go
and lyg in wayt vntyll morn,
 And þat he suld not scape þem fro,
 for forfe*tur* myȝt fall þerfor*n*.
 6295 he suld not lett for frend ne foo
 no langer tyll his lyf ware lorn.
 601. 60 a when mycol hath þis herd
 how hyr fader can say,
 6300 ffull ferdly furth scho ferd
 to marre yt, yf scho may.

The king was furious. He commanded his men to lie in ambush until morning; neither friend nor foe should stop him until David had lost his life. But Michal was determined to thwart her father's plans.

526 »Daudid», scho sayd, »my husband hende,
 my fader hath full hertly hyght
 he sall no[t] fyne for fo ne frend
 to morn or he hath marde þi myȝt.
 6305 þi way wyȝthly behoues the wende
and leue me here a wylsom wyȝt.
 For bettur is þou lyfe *and* lende
 þen [þat] we both to dede be dyȝt.»
 he assented certayn
 6310 syghand *with* sympyll chere.
 yf þei perteyd *with* payn,
 no question is to inquere.

Michal wanted her husband to run away and leave her behind. It would be better that he should be safe and sound than that they should both die. He gave his assent and they parted.

She then laid a dry stock in his bed and covered it with suitable clothing. When the king's men came, she told them that David was dying. They believed her and returned home.

- 527 Swylke wemen were worthy to wed
 to helpe þer husbandes in a nede.
 ffor hyr ded was scho not adred, 6315
 bot ȝit scho dyd an oþer dede.
 Scho layd a dry stoke in his bed
 and couert yt with worthy wede.
 when knyghtes come hym to haue [d]ede,
 scho sayd, »sers, sen he fro cowrt ȝede, 6320
 he toke so hertly care;
 his lyf days ar nere done.»
 þei wened well yt so ware;
 agayn þei we[nt] full sone.

When the king heard their story, he commanded them to go back and bring David to him. He would kill him that very day. But David had already escaped.

- 528 And euyn os þei in syȝt com see, 6325
 vnto the kyng so con þei say.
 he bad be lyue, »bryng hym to me;
 he sall dee with dole þis day!»
 þei saw yt myȝt no bettur be;
 vnto his hows agayn go þei. 6330
 In his bed þe fand a mekyll tree
 hyld, and he was went a way.
 when þe kyng saw he was hale,
 hys hert had sorow enogh.

— — — — — 6335
 — — — — —

David went to Ramah and told Samuel how he had escaped from Saul's evil devices. Samuel said that it was God's will that David should be king one day.

- 529 he sware his doyghtur suld be schent;
 full he leued to lose his land.
 To ramatha is Daudid went,
 wher samuel is soiorand. 6340
 he told to hym all his entent,
 how [þat] the kyng so fellows fand,
 Bot þat he so þe lyfe was lent.
 both loued þei god with hert and hand.
 he sayd, »sun, for this thyng 6345
 in hert haue þou no toyȝt.
 god will þat þou be kyng
 when all his whylys ar wroyȝt.»

527. 3 dr cancelled before ded / r cancelled before was / 7 MS. lede / 12 MS. well / — 528. 1 Cf. Gladly I wolde Se þat segg in syȝt. Sir Gawain and the Green Knight 226.

530 Aftur þis ware long to tell
 6350 how euer þe [kyng] hys k[i]nd[e]s kyd.
 ffor messege made he mony a mell;
 to be his bayne ay can he byd.
 fol. 60 b when Ionatas herd how þat yt fell,
 grett heuenes in hert he hyde.
 6355 ffor dowe of dede [þat con hym quell]
 [he wold bot wytt] how Dauid dyde.
 Ryȝt vnto ramatha
 he went þe gaynest gatte.
 The trew lufe be twen þem two
 6360 myȝt no bale gare abate.

It would take long to tell how the king always showed his evil nature. Jonathan, who was very sorrowful in his heart and wanted to know how David fared, went to Ramah.

531 when Dauid herd say for certayn
 þat Ionatas wold com hym tyll,
 ffull gladly went he hym agayn
 and thanked hym oft of all gud wyll.
 6365 Of his frenschepe he was full fayn,
 for he lufed lely lowd and styll.
 he told hym all þe procese playn
 how þe kyng aspyd hym to spyll.
 To fotte can Dauid fall
 6370 for his god wyll a[ll] way.
 Ionatas says he sall
 helpe all þat he may.

David gladly went to meet Jonathan and thanked him for all his good will. He threw himself at his feet and Jonathan promised to help him.

532 »[To] The kyng, my fader, wyll I fare
 and faynd his frenschepe forto geyte.
 6375 ffor þe to speke I sall not spare,
 all þof he wold me bynd or bete.
 At erst þat I her answer
 of lastand luf or like to thrett,
 þat þou may kepe þi self fro care,
 6380 þou sall be wernd, or euer I ette.»
 Dauid says, »for mercy,
 þou mendes all my myschefe.»
 þei kyssed full curtasly,
 and so þei toke þer leue.

Jonathan said he would go to his father and speak well of David. Then he would let David know about the result. David thanked him, and they parted.

530. 2 he cancelled before þe / 7 MS. he wold / 8 MS. bot wytt he wold / 12 first a in abate above the line | — 532. 3 fare cancelled before spare.

Jonathan went to the king's court where there was a great feast. He asked Saul why David, who had done nothing wrong, was not there.

- 533 Ionatas went *with* sympyll chere. 6385
 vnto þe cowrt he come in hyc
 when grett fest was of folke in fere.
 vnto his fader he sayd sothly,
 »ser, Dauid þat is to yow so dere
 and in his Dedes ys ay doghty, 6390
 how ys yt so he is not here?
 he myȝt menske all þis mangery.
 he is *your* sun by law
 and my broþer also.
 Be oght þat euer I know, 6395
 he trespast neuer yow to.

Jonathan described all David's merits. The king said that he was lying and that they should both smart for it.

- 534 he is ay redy in *your* ryȝt
 agayn *your* rebels forto ryse;
 Phylsteyns hath he feld *with* fyȝt
 and owtrayd all *our* enmyse. 6400
 In cowrt is non so cumly knyȝt,
 ne non so wyse, yf he vs avyse.»
 The kyng þen loked on hym full lyȝt
 and sayd, »lossell fowle, þou lyse.
 þat sall ȝe both aby[e], 6405
 als sone os I hym see.
 þou maynteyns *with* maystry
 þe most enmy to me.» fol. 61 a

When Jonathan pointed out how faithful David had always been to the king, the latter was possessed by the devil and would have killed his son if his men had not intervened. Jonathan fled from his father.

- 535 Ionatas answerd *with* word hende: 6410
 »ser, yt hath not so bene sene;
 ȝe haue fun *your* faythfull frend;
 to *your* bedyng bown hath he bene.»
 þen wex þe kyng full of þe fend;
 he wared fast *with* word kene. 6415
 hys sun he schope forto schend,
 yf wyght men had not gone be twene.
 Ionatas wyst well enogh
 þen how þe game wold go.
 Of dreghe he hym *with* drogh
 and fled his fader fro. 6420

533. 6 h cancelled after his | — 534. 9 MS. abyd | — 535. 11 hy cancelled before he.

- 536 To Daud wyghtly is he went,
 wher he was in grett stody sted,
 And sayd how he suld haue bene schent
 be for his fader, had he not fled,
 6425 And how no mercy myȝt be ment,
 ne specialty may none be sped.
 »*per* is no o*per* tale to tent
 bot wend or wage þi hede in wed.»
 To his fette þen Daud fell
 6430 and thanked hym of all thyng.
 Iuf þat was þem o mell
 made payn at þer pertyng.
- 537 Daud sayd, »*ser*, sen yt is so,
 for souerayn god þus he be soght!
 6435 All yf þi fader wyll be my foo,
 be þou my frend and fayle me noyȝt!»
 Ionatas sayd, »for well or wo,
 what warke in ward *with* me be wroyȝt,
 þe cunnand made be twyx vs two,
 6440 þat sall I hald *with* hert and toyȝt.»
 þei durst no langer dwell,
 for folke ware not þer frend.
 þei kyssed and morned omell,
 and so þer way þei wend.
- 6445 538 Ionatas went *with* sympyll chere
 agayn vnto þat same Cety,
 And dauid soyght *with* sorow sere
 vntyll a town, was named Nobbe.
 þor wuned a byschope of grett power,
 6450 Abymalec at home hegh he.
 he welcumd Daud os his dere
 and asked hym *aftur* his meneȝe.
 he sayd, »*ser*, I am sent
 in messege fro þe kyng.
 6455 My meneȝe furth ar wentt
 for o*per* nedfull thyng.

He went to David and told him that no mercy or affection could be expected from the king. If David did not flee, his life would be in danger. They parted sorrowfully.

David said that the king would have to answer for it to Almighty God. He hoped that Jonathan would never fail him. Jonathan promised to keep their covenant whatever happened.

Jonathan returned to the city and David went to a town called Nob, where he was welcomed by Bishop Ahimelech. He said that he was sent as the king's messenger. His household had gone elsewhere for other needful things.

536. 6 stede cancelled before sped | — 538. 8 ne in meneȝe written above eȝ.

David asked the bishop to give him an armour and some food, because he had not eaten anything for three days and had a troublesome journey before him. The bishop said that he had hallowed wheaten bread. But of arms he had none but a good sword.

- 539 Myn armour gart þei me for gete.
 yf þou haue any, helpe me!» he says.
 »And als yf þou haue oght at ette,
 for sene I ette, ar gone thre days. 6460
 And ser, I haue meystur of mette,
 for I haue to wend wylsom ways.»
 The byschope says, »I haue of whette
 blessyd bred þat is to prays. fol. 61 b
 Bot Armour none I bere, 6465
 ne wapyns with to fyȝt
 Bot a gud sword of were;
 þat sall be þin be ryȝt.»

After he had had a refreshing meal David was given the sword of Goliath. There came in a man who was the king's steward. He did not know of the king's wrath, but what he saw and heard he kept well in his heart.

- 540 he cald hym kyndly, as he can,
 with mette and drynke and myrthis more. 6470
 Goliath sword he gaf hym þe[n]
 qwylke hym selfe wan in feld be fore.
 In þis meyn tyme com in a man,
 Odeth, þat keped þe kynges st[o]re.
 he wyst not how Debate be gan, 6475
 ne of þe kyng how wroth þei ware;
 Bot þat he fore can see,
 and talken þem betwen,
 In hert well haldes hee,
 for so was aftur sene. 6480

David found but few friends he could trust. He could not feel safe because he might be betrayed by his speech. The Bible tells us about his wonderful deeds and adventures.

- 541 þen Daid furth his frendes soght;
 he fand bot few in to affy.
 In certayn soiorne wold he noyȝt:
 þat folke by spech myȝt hym aspy. 6485
 ffull mony wonder werke he wroyȝt,
 als he com in sere cumpany.
 And how all was to endyng broyȝt,
 þe bybyll bers wyttene þerby.
 yt ware long tyme to tell
 how [he] hys cowrse kest 6490
 And what ferlys be fell
 or he was broyȝt to rest.

539. 9 t of Bot above r cancelled / — 540. 3 MS. þem / 6 MS. stere / —
 541. 2 MS. into / 4 a of aspy above the line.

- 542 Bot poyntes þat falys to *our* procese,
 sun of þis werke we wyll be gyne:
 6495 how þat he wund in wyldernese,
 in a forest þat heygh sephyn.
 þore come men to hym, more *and* lesse,
 of cosyngs *and* of oþer kyn.
 And þos þat owtlayd or exyld ys,
 6500 þos went to hym, all þat myȝt wyne.
 þei bede hym forto be
 his men [in all] manere.
 So in schort tyme had he
 fawre hunderth folke in fere.
- 6505 543 Now in þis meyn tyme herd þei tell
 with folke þat ferd þore to *and* fray
 how the phylysteyns, fers *and* fell,
 in seged a cyte þat heght Ceilay,
 6510 And how þei made maystrays o mell
and sayd þat þei suld bryn *and* slay
 Ebrews þat in þat Cete dwell
and all þer thresour to þem ta.
 þei brynt *and* wold not blyn
 a bowt both lengh *and* brede.
 6515 þen þei þat ware *with* in
 lyfed in grett dole *and* drede.
- fol. 62 a 544 Qwen Daud wyst þei suld be slayn
 [he] wrscheþed god *with* wyll *and* toyȝt.
 þen vnto god fast can he frayn
 6520 whedder he suld helpe þem *and* he moght.
 And sone he had answer agayn
and sayd, »[g]o furth *and* drede þe noyȝt!»
 To geydder his folke he was full fayn,
and vnt[o] cyala sene þei soyȝt.
 6525 þor was no tale of trewse;
 phylysteyns fast þei feld.
 And þei resaued þe Ebrews
 þat in þat Cyte dwelled.

He lived in the wilderness in a forest called Ziph. Cousins and other kinsmen came to him, also outlaws and exiles. In a short time there were four hundred men under his command.

News came that the Philistines were besieging a city called Keilah, threatening to burn and slay the Hebrews there and take their treasures. The townsfolk lived in great distress.

David worshipped God and inquired of Him whether he should help them. The Lord told him to go ahead without fear, and the city was relieved.

542. 4 MS. aforest / 10 MS. all in / — 543. 4 MS. acyte / 5 -rays of maystrays above ters cancelled / — 544. 2 MS. þei / 6 MS. do.

The authorities of the city paid homage to David and placed themselves under his command. He and his household were lavishly treated to meat and drink. They also got plenty of gold, armour and clothes.

- 545 þe souerance of þat same Cyte
 honerd Daudid *with hert and hende* 6530
 And bed at his bedyng to be
and at his wyll to wun and wende.
 In þat Cyte þen soiornde he,
and in grett lykyng þor þei lend
 So þat hym self *and his menege* 6535
with mette and drynke ware mekyllamend.
 þore gatt þei gold gud wone,
 armurs *and oper wedys.*
 Sum þat be fore had none
 hose now all þat þem nedes. 6540

When Saul heard that David was staying in Keilah, he was very glad, because David would have little chance of escape now that he had left the forest and entered a town.

- 546 word of þis werke full wyd can spryng
with lerned and lewd in all þat land.
 And sone was told to Saull þe kyng
 how Daudid was so soiorndand.
 he was full fayn of þat tythyng, 6545
 for þer he hopyd to haue hym at hand
 And into a bale hym forto bryng,
 for his strenght myzt no man stand.
 he sayd, »sone sall we see
 hys bost *proued full prest,* 6550
 when he haldes þat Cete
and leuys þe fayre forest.»

The king secretly proposed to do away with David and sent men to Keilah as spies. But God was always on David's side and told him to flee to the forest before the king arrived.

- 547 he *purpassed* hym full preuely
 Daudid to schame *and [to] schend*
 And ordand *with clene cumpany* 6555
 to Ceila sodanly to wend.
 he sent sere men to spyre *and spyre*
 how Daudid tytest myzt be tened.
 bot he had hertyng hastely
 fro god, þat euer was his frend. 6560
 God werned hym fast to flee
 with his men, old *and z yng,*
 And in þe forest to be
 for þe kynges comyng.

545. 4 town cancelled before to / 7 Soi, with i cancelled / 10 weddys, with second d cancelled / — 546. 5 th cancelled after þat / 7 MS. abale / — 547. 11 be be, former be cancelled.

- 6565 548 ffor yf þe kyng þat Cete crafe
 or any sawt to yt sett,
 The Cyteners þem self to sayue
 sall sone delyuer yt ose dew dett.
 þen suld Dauid no helpyng haue
 6570 bot be tane os a fysch in A nett.
 fol. 62 b And sone went both knyȝt *and* knaue
 to forest, where none wold þem [I]ett,
 And when þe kyng yt knew
 þat þei ware past fro playn,
 6575 No ferther wold he *persew*
 bot tytt turned hom agayn.

For if the king demanded the city or laid siege to it, the citizens would surrender in order to save themselves, and David would be caught like a fish in a net. Everybody went to hide in the forest. When the king heard this, he returned home.

- 549 þei toke [to] a wod þat heyȝt geden,
 bot þore þei soiornd bot lytyll whyle;
 6580 [þen] to a forest þat heyȝt Cephyn;
 þore hoped he non suld hym begyle.
 þor Ionatas fro all his kyn
 to see Dauid soyȝt mony a myle.
 he was wel [glad] his wrschepe to wy[n],
 all yf his fader wold fayn hym fyle.
 6585 yt was myrth, when þei mett,
 to wytt how all yt was.
 þei kyssed and for joy grett,
and sone sayd Ionatas,

They stayed for a short time in a wood called En-gedi and then went to the forest of Ziph. Thither came Jonathan to see David. Great was their joy when they met again.

- 550 »Dauid», he says, »drede þe no dele,
 6590 all yf þe kyng þre[pe aga]in the,
 For aftur wo all sall be well:
 þou sall gouernnd [in] grett degree.
 I am [þ]in freynd; þat sall þou fele:
 þer sall not fawt be fun in me.
 6595 To sayue þi self seke þi sele;
 yt is the fayrest forto flee.
 þou sal be kyng be kynd
and full grett lordschepe lede.
 Make me þen in mynd
 6600 *and* thynke on ayre don dede.

David need have no fear, said Jonathan. Everything would end well and David would one day rule in great honour. He had better save himself now by fleeing. Jonathan hoped David would remember him when he became king.

548. 8 MS. sett / 11 MS. fererther / — 549. 3 MS. Bot / 7 MS. wysch for wyn / 9 MS. when þat / — 550. 2 MS. þre ennen in the / 4 gouernnd *inverted spelling*, cf. 779: 7 / 5 MS. infreynd / 9 MS. salbe.

It is wise to suffer in order to gain wealth, and he is not to be praised who cannot hold out until his misery ceases. David would survive and be king after Saul.

- 551 yt is wysdom, os wysmen says,
 at suffer welth forto wyn.
 And in no poynt he is to prays
 þat can not byde his bale to blyn. 6605
 All yf þe kyng þe wayte all ways,
 he sall not dere for all his dyn,
 þou sall endure aftur his days
and stand in state þat he standes in.
 þus bad he hym to beld
and sayd he suld be kyng. 6610
 Daudid curtasly kneled
and thanked hym of all thyng.

Then they parted and Jonathan returned home without anybody knowing where he had been. David kept to the woods. He dared not dwell in towns or cities.

- 552 þen perted þei, yf yt ware payn,
 for full trew luf was þem be twen.
 And Ionatas went home agayn 6615
 so þat non wyst whore he had bene.
 And Daudid held his peyse full playn
 in wodes, for he suld noyȝt be sene.
 And euer he has in vncertayn
 whore he myȝt dwell *with* owtyn tene. 6620
 he durst not dwell for Dyn
 in town, ne in Cyte.
 In the forest of Cephyn
 ay toyȝt hym best to be.

Life in the wilderness was far from luxurious. They drank no wine but that of the well, no beer but that of the running brook. Through the treacherous Doeg evil befell Ahimelech, for he told the king the following tale.

- 553 All in desert so con þei dwell; fol. 63a 6625
 of ryall ryches noyȝt þei reke.
 þei dranke no wyn bot of þe well,
 ne beyre bot of þe reynnand beke.
 In þis meyn tym is so to tell 6630
 how þe kyng in yre was euer freke
 And of falshed þat þen be fell
 through Odeth to Abymaleke.
 þe kyng for Daudid spyred
 forto bryng hym in bale.
 Odeth his mayster herd, 6635
 stert vp *and* told þis tale.

552. 7 vn of vncertayn inserted over in | — 553. 5 MS. forto | 8 by cancelled after to.

- 554 »Syr kyng,» he sayd, »I meruell me
 þat þou for Dauid hath any drede.
 I saw hym in þin awn Cete,
 6640 wher þi frendes fayre con hym fede.
 Abymalec, byschope of Nobbe,
 full mekyll beld con to hym be[de].
 Goliass sword to hym toke he
 and kyssed hym kyndly when he zede.
 6645 I wened noyzt ze ware wroth,
 and sertes, ser, had I wyst,
 I suld haue bun þem both
 and led þem to your lyst.

He had seen David in Saul's own city, where the king's friends had treated him kindly. Ahimelech had given David the sword of Goliath. »If I had known that you were angry with David, I should have bound them both and led them to you.

- 555 And ser, to proue þis þat I say,
 sendes for þat popelard preuely.»
 6650 The kyng þer in [made] no Delay;
 full herdy men he sentt in hy.
 þe byschop broyzt þei þe same day
 with his kynred in cumpany.
 6655 The kyng hym asked in rude aray
 why he mayntened his most enmy.
 Abymalec hym excused
 be wytty wordes all ways.
 hys resons ware refused,
 6660 bot softly þus he says,

Acting on Doeg's advice the king sent for the bishop. The king asked him rudely why he had given support to his arch-enemy. Ahimelech excused himself cleverly but in vain.

- 556 »Syr kyng, þou may full wynly wake
 whyll luf lastes be twyx yow t[wo].
 Me toyzt full well sett for þi sake
 all þe eys þat I myzt to hym do.
 6665 he sayd he suld þi messege make,
 And for he suld more sewrly go,
 Goliass sword I coud hym take,
 qwylke hym self wan in feld in [w]o.
 he standes in mony a stowre
 6670 and ys euer bown to wende
 fforto sayue þin honowre.
 þerfor, ser, he is þi frend.»

He said he had helped David for the king's sake. David, who said he was Saul's messenger, had been given the sword of Goliath in order to travel more safely. David was the king's friend, always ready to defend his honour.

555. 12 t of bot above o / — 556. 2 o and part of w cut away at edge of paper | 8 MS. fo.

The king then commanded his knights to kill the bishop. But all of them shrank from falling upon a priest except Daeg, who drew his sword and slew him.

557 þen was þe kyng wode, I warrand,
 when he of all þis werkyng wyst.
 hys kenyst knyghtes þen he cum[m]and
 to kyll hym þat hys enmys kyst. 6675
 Bot non on hym wold lay þer hand
 be cause he was goddes byschop blyst,
 Owtakyn Odeth, þat fawtt fyrst fand; fol. 63 b
 to werke wo þat was [hys] lyst. 6680
 hys sword full swyth he droghe
 with oþer of his assent.
 The byschope þer he sloygh
 with all his clene couent.

He and his men would not stop the slaughter until they had slain fourscore and five of the bishop's priests. Then they went and burnt the city of Nob. None of the people there escaped except Abiathar, the eldest son of Ahimelech.

558 he wold noyðt stynt so forto stryfe 6685
 with all þat come þat close within,
 So þat þei slogh fowr score and fyue
 of þe byschop clerkes, or euer þei blyn.
 þen bad he þem wend be lyue 6690
 þe burgh of Nobbe forto bryn,
 And þat þei suld stroye chyld and wyue
 to þe ott[er]est end of all his kyn.
 þei wasted all þat þore wore
 þat non away was wun,
 Owtake Abyathar, 6695
 Abymalec eldynt sun.

He came to no harm, because God had ordained him to flee. He told David about the death of his father and his fourscore priests and about the destruction of Nob. David felt pity for the people who had died for him. Abiathar became bishop in his father's stead.

559 yt schope so þat he was not schent;
 god ordand hym to flee be fore.
 To Dauid wyghyly is he went
 and sayd to hym with syghyng sore 6700
 how all was tan with turnament,
 his fader and his clerkes, IIII score,
 And how Noabbe with bale was brent
 and non on lyfe left, lesse ne more.
 Dauid says oft, »alas
 þat folke for me ar dede!» 6705
 Abyathar þen byschop was
 furth in his fader stede.

557. 3 MS. cummand or cunnand / 8 MS. werke hym / — 558. 2 all above the following þat / 10 MS. non of þem.

560 kyng saul euer by consell cast
 6710 how þat he myȝt best do Daudi dere.
 And full oft sythyes he fowled fast
 with all his fors hym forto fere.
 Bot Daudi euer fro perels past,
 als was goddes wyll hym forto were.
 6715 And so be fell yt at þe last
 þat Daudi myȝt haue done hym dere.
 And how þat tym be tyd,
 we wyll take t[i]me to tell,
 Both of dedes þat þei dyd
 6720 and what wordes wore þem omell.

King Saul was constantly trying to kill David. But David always escaped, as was God's will. At last he could have done Saul harm; what then befell and what words were spoken between them, will be told now.

561 The kyng full ray[the]ly can ryd
 Daudi to wast for werlde's wele.
 And Daudi durst not well abyd;
 so ware þe kynges folke ferly fele.
 6725 Vnder A hyll he con hym hyde
 in a depe hole to hald his hele
 So þat þe kyng suld passe be syd,
 and noþer suld with oþer dele.
 Bo[t] or þei past þat pase,
 6730 euyñ bot þem two be twen
 Be fell a ferly case,
 os þen þe soth was sene.

When the king came riding to kill him, David sought shelter under a hill in a deep cave, so that the king should go past him. But before they passed that narrow passage, a strange incident occurred.

562 The kyng sone of the hole had a syȝt
 þat yt was merke and owt of mynd.
 6735 fol. 64 a Down of his palfray con he lyȝt
 to eyse his womb be way of kynd.
 And als he in his ded was dyȝt,
 Daudi folke soyn con hym fynd.
 þei sayd, »ser, go ryue throwgh hym ryȝt;
 6740 oft hath he [þe] persewed and pynd.»
 Daudi says, »god forbede!
 he is A kyng enoynt.»
 Bot or euer þei ȝede,
 he playd a perlus poyntt.

When the king saw that the cave was dark and secluded, he dismounted to ease his bowels. David was urged by his men to run him through but he would not hurt the Lord's anointed. However, before leaving he played a dangerous trick.

560. 10 MS. tome / — 561. 9 MS. Bor / 12 sone wo cancelled before soth.

He cut off a piece of the king's garment, and then he cried to Saul that he had been at David's mercy. For a proof he could look at his mantle, which David had torn without the king's noticing it.

- 563 ffull preuely his space he spyde; 6745
of þe kynges cloyȝt A peyse he kytt.
The kyng þen reded hym to ryde,
and als he was bown furth to flytt,
Dauid curtasly þus cryed,
»ser kyng, to wend þus ys no wytt. 6750
I myȝt haue made þe here to byde.
be hald þi mantyll and yt ys slytt!
When I þis fro þe reued
away, and þou not wyst,
I myȝt haue hade þi hede 6755
als lyghtly, yf me lyst.

David ended by assuring the king of his absolute loyalty. When Saul realized what great peril he had been in and how wisely David had acted, he was convinced that David would be king.

- 564 And þerfor, ser, persew me noyȝt;
I am not glad þe forto greue,
Bot bown in all þat euer I moght
þe and þi reme forto releue.» 6760
þe kyng þen herd and hym be toyȝt
how he was þore in grett myscheue,
And how wysly þore Dauid wroyȝt;
no more in malyce wold he meue.
he trowd be þis tokenyng 6765
with in hym selfe alsone
þat Dauid suld be kyng
when he had his dedes done.

When Saul saw David's strong troop of soldiers, he thought victory very doubtful. He said he was propitiated by David's meekness and was willing to let bygones be bygones.

- 565 he saw Dauid was well Arayd
with feyghyng folke full fayre in fere 6770
And toyȝt, yf he to batell brayde,
who so suld wyn wrschepe wore in were.
þerfor all sothly þus he sayd,
»Dauid, þis ded þou hath done here
And þi grett meknese made me payde; 6775
I grawntt þe peyse be my powere.
Sen þou so sufferand ys,
þi lordschep lang wyll last.
I grawntt þe forgyfnes
of all poyntes þat ar past, 6780

563. 8 yt above he cancelled / slytt above kytt cancelled / — 565. 12 Saul 'and' David vnitas in right margin.

566 So þat þou faythfully sall fulfyll
 þe forward fest be twyx vs two,
 And þat þou do gode *and* non yll
 to my folke when I found þem fro.»
 6785 Daurid sayd, »*ser*, with gud wyll,
 als þou wyll say, so wyll I do.»
 þe kyng þen cald hys folk hym tyll;
 to galgala agayn can þei go.
 And Daurid wentt [þen hynne]
 with his men euer ychon
 6790 To þe forest of Cephyn;
 fol. 64 b he wyst no bettur wone.

He made David promise to fulfil faithfully the agreement between them and look after his people well when he was gone. The king and his men returned to Gibeah, but David could think of no better idea than going to the forest of Ziph.

567 In þis meyn tyme þat I of tell
 Dyuerse farles con befall.
 6795 The nobyll prophett samuell
 þen dyed, as erthly men bus all.
 þen Daurid men meued þem omell,
 for fude in forest fand þei small.
 And þore be syde Cephyn con dwell
 6800 a full ryche man, his name Noball.
 he had ryches by raw
 of rent and ryalte,
 Bot he lyfed not by þe law
 of moyses *and* Iosue.

Remarkable things happened. The prophet Samuel died. David's men were getting short of food in the forest. Close by there lived a very rich man of the name of Nabal, but he did not live according to the law of Moses and Joshua.

6805 568 No man coud rekyn hys ryches ryfe;
 he was ryall in his aray.
 Bot euer he was with sturt *and* stryfe
 þat no man myzt hym [d]o his pay.
 6810 A gud woman hade he to wyfe,
and hyr name was cald Abygay.
 Scho wrschept god in all hyr lyfe
and at hyr myzt mayntened his lay.
 Scho was full trest *and* trew
and lufed with more *and* lesse
 6815 And fayr of hyd *and* hew,
 Als þe boke beys wytnese.

He had immense riches, but was never satisfied. Abigail, his wife, was a good woman, who worshipped God and lived according to His law. She was beloved by high and low alike.

566. 6 þou above I cancelled | 9 MS. with hym | 11 And cancelled before To | --
 568. 4 MS. to.

David often met shepherds that tended Nabal's cattle. He treated them like members of his own household, protecting their herds against wild beasts, taking nothing unlawfully. And the time came for the sheep to be shorn.

569 his catell was in sesyn sett
 als ouer all in þat cuntre.
 Daid oft *with* hyrdes mett
and mayntend þem als his meneze. 6820
 Wyld wulfes *and* lyons oft he lett
 to do dysese to Naball fee.
 All yf his fod was ferre to fett,
 no thyng vnto rewill take wold hee.
 So ose þe zere con slype,
 þe seson fell þerfor 6825
 þat men þer schepe suld clype,
and þis was costum þore.

Nabal made arrangements for his feast and had it announced all over the country, as was the custom there. David sent men to Nabal to tell him about their misery and ask him for some food.

570 And so be tyde yt in þat tyd
 þat Naball hath his fest ordand. 6830
 [In] All þe cuntre was yt cryd,
 os costum was in þat land;
 — — — — —
 — — — — —
 ffast vnder þat ylke forest syde 6835
 swylke solace suld be so nere hand.
 he made wyght men to wende
 at muster þer myschefe
 And pray Naball to send
 sum fude for þer releue. 6840

They came to Nabal when the feast was in full swing. On hearing that it was David who had sent them, he said they should be treated as felons, because David was the king's enemy. He would not give them anything.

571 Then of þe wyghest furth ar wentt
 to Naball, whore play was plente.
 when þei had told all þer entent,
 dyspytusly answerd þen hee,
 »wh[o] is he þat þus yow hath sent?» 6845
 þei sayd, »Daid, þe sun of Iesse.»
 he sayd þei suld be schamed *and* schent
 as felons þat ar fayn to flee.
 »he is þe kynges enemy 6850
and hath full wekydly wroygt.
 all hys fors I dyfye;
 here sall he haue rygt noygt.»

569. 2 MS. 'And' als / 9 þe inserted above the line / — 570. 9 MS. wyghty / —
 571. 5 MS. when / 11 Als cancelled before all.

572 þe messyngers agayn þei goo
and told Dauid euere ylk a dele.

6855 When he yt wyst, he was full wo
and sayd yt suld be venged well.
 hee sware grett othes þat he suld slo
 Naball for all his hertly sele.

6860 And aftur hym all oþer mo
 þat to hym fell suld angers fele;
 Both man *and* wyfe *and* chyld,
 he sayd þei suld be lorn.
 And bestes, tame and wyld,
 no thyng suld be for born,

6865 573 þat þei ne suld passe by sword or knyfe
 in what syd so þat þei myȝt be sene.

Sone [aftur] raked þer resons ryfe
 amang þe hyrdmen all be dene.

6870 þei went *and* told to Naball wyfe
 þat wytty was *with* owtyn wene
 how þat hyr lord suld lose his lyfe,
 for he [had] carped wordes kene

And myssayd Dauid men
 þat folke ware fayn to plese.
 6875 ffro scho his cawse coud kene,
 hyr hert was not at esse.

574 Scho menys to mend yt, yf scho may,
 þat þei suld not be putt to pyne.

6880 In gud garmentes scho made hyr gay
with pe[l]ure *and* *with* pyrre fyne.
 And grett present[es] sch[o] con puruay
 of bred, flesch *and* nobyll wyne

And wentt to mete hym on þe way
 toward þe forest of Cephyn.

6885 So leued scho forto lett
 þe harmes he can þem hette.
 And sone when scho hym mett,
 scho fell down to his fette.

When the messengers had told David everything, he was very angry and swore that he would avenge himself not only on Nabal but also on all others that pertained to him, both man, wife, and child. Not even the beasts should be spared.

They should not escape wherever they were seen. The herdsmen told Nabal's clever wife how her husband would lose his life for speaking evil to David's men. From that moment her heart was not at ease.

She meant to put things right if she could. Decked with fine garments and provided with bread, flesh and wine she went to meet David on the road to Ziph. As soon as she saw him, she fell at his feet.

Abigail implored David not to make the poor people suffer for one man's guilt. Her husband was out of his mind. God forbid that David should fight with a fool! If she had but known about his men's request, food would not have been denied them.

- 575 »A, gentyll knyght of Iesse kynd,
 þat sal be kyng be reson ryȝt, 6890
 gayre not þe pure pepyll be pyned
 in dyuerse place for a man plyght.
 My lord is maysed *and* owt of mynd;
 anentes hym self hath he no myght.
 God for bed þat þe folke suld fynd 6895
 þi felnes *with* a foyle to fyght!
 I wyst not þi men wore
 to aske vs oght of our gude.
 Sertes, *ser*, had I bene þore,
 þei suld haue faled no [f]ud. 6900

She begged him to accept her poor present. David, who saw her fair face, promised that neither her husband nor his people should be injured. She thanked David and gave him meat and drink.

- 576 And þerfor, *ser* knyȝt, no ferrer kare
 bot take of me þis pure present.»
 þen Dauid saw scho was full fayre;
 grett fauour in hyr face he fand.
 he sayd, »Dame, be not in dyspayre. fol. 65 b 6905
 I graunt þe, he to þi husband.
 Non of þi pepyll sall we payre.»
 scho thanked hym *with* hert *and* hand.
 þei toke mett *and* drynke;
 þer of þe folke ware fayn. 6910
 he thankes hyr, als hym thynke,
and so he turnys agayn.

Abigail told her husband what would have been his fate if she had not intervened. He got such a shock that he died within ten days. David was glad that he had not killed Nabal.

- 577 Abygay told hyr husband hale
 what sorows he suld full sone haue sene
 And sufferd dede in his awn sale, 6915
 had not hyr witt *and* werkyng bene.
 And when he herd hyr tell þis tale,
 vnto his hert he toke slyke teyne,
with in ten days he dyed *with* bale.
 few of his meneȝe can hym meyne. 6920
 To Dauid sone was sayd
 þat Naball endyd so.
 þen was he ryȝt well payd
 þat he helped not þerto.

575. 1 kyng cancelled before kynd / 2 MS. salbe / 12 gud / — 576. 5 liber
 jus Regum *and* De nupcijs dauid 'and' Abygay in upper margin / 9 þer cancelled
 before mett.

6925 578 when Naball þus with wo was went
and dede with outyn darte or knyfe,
 ffor Abygay hath Daudid sent
and weded hyr vnto his wyfe.
 This woman þus turned euyll entent
 6930 *and helped to stynt full mekyll stryfe.*
 And þerfor god slyke grace hath sent
 in lykyng forto lede hyr lyfe.
 An oþer he wan also
 through dughty dedes he dyde.
 6935 þore had he wyfys two,
and Micoll was the thryd.

When Nabal had thus died without dart or knife, David married Abigail. Thanks to her, evil had been turned into good. Therefore God sent her grace to lead a happy life. Through his brave deeds David won another wife, and Michal was the third.

579 þen folke of cepbyn had grett enuy,
 for Daudid soiornd þor so lang.
 To saull sent þei preuely
 6940 *and bad þat he suld make hym strang,*
 ffor Daudid þat was his enmy
 suld not be mayntened þem a mang.
 þei hete he sall haue hym in hy,
 for with hym gudly wyll þei gang.
 6945 when saul herd þis tale
 folke ware not Daudid frendes,
 his ost he ordand hale,
and wyghtly ydder he wendes.

The Ziphites did not like David to stay among them any longer, so they promised Saul secretly to help him to catch David. When Saul heard that they were not David's friends, he went thither with his whole host.

580 when Daudid herd muster omell
 6950 kyng saul in þat reme can ryde,
 he sent his folke by fyrth *and fell*
 whore he wold buske to abyd.
 And sone con þei to hym tythynges tell
 he soiornde by a cyte syde,
 6955 And þat þei dyȝt þem þore to dwell
and telled þer tentes apon þat tyde.
 Daudid hymself hath soyght
 tyll he of þem had syȝt,
 ffor in his hert he toyȝt
 6960 to be nere þem þat nyȝt.

David sent his men to find out where Saul was going to stay. They reported that Saul's men were pitching their tents near a city. David himself went near enough to see them.

579. 1 MS. þen grett / — 580. 4 but I cancelled before buske.

He chose two faithful companions for the task in hand: Abishai and Abiathar. These three set out, and it was common knowledge that they were going to the king's tent, where he and Abner were sleeping. Everybody else was asleep too, so they could proceed without risk.

- 581 Two felows þat he trew had fun
cheded he furth for sych a chare:
On Abysay, his systur sun, fol. 66 a
and a bold man Abyathar.
þoo three þe[r] gatte so hath be gun, 6965
and any wyght of þem was warre
þat to þe kynges tent ar þei wun,
wher he lay and þe Duke Abnare.
All folke war fast on slepe
aftur þe mydnyȝt tyde. 6970
þor was no cowsr to kepe;
þei ware s[ure] on ylka syd.

David would not do the sleepers any harm, but he took a fine cup of gold and also the king's best hunting-spear. When he was in safety on the other side of a stream, David cried, «Awake, Sir Abner, awake!»

- 582 Dauid þat euer was myld of mode
sees how sadly þei slepand are.
All yf þei aspyde to spyll his blud, 6975
vnto þem wold he do no dere.
bot a grett coupe of gold full gud
and als þe kynges chefe chasyng spere
þei toke, and euyn agayn þei ȝode,
and ouer a burn þei con þem bere. 6980
And [on] þat oþer syd,
whore þ[ei] no harme myȝt take,
Dauid full kenly cryd,
»wake, ser abnere, [w]ake!

David told him that they behaved like children not to keep better watch. Abner then asked him scornfully why he made such a noise near the king. When Saul recognized David's voice, he thought there was treason among his own people.

- 583 ȝe werke, os ȝe ware chylder ȝeng, 6985
þat kepes a kyng and slepis so sade
Qwyls men beyre away his thyng.»
þe duke of hym þe he[r]yng hade
And answerd hym os in hethyng,
»why cryes þou so, vnknawn lade, 6990
And makes swylke noyse þus nere þe kyng?»
þen saul wakynd and was rad.
he trowed sum ware vntrew
of þo þat wuned hym wyth,
ffor þe voyce well he knew 6995
þat yt was of Dauid.

S 581. 5 þei / þei over þor cancelled / 12 sone / —. 582. 10 þat / 12 make / — 583. 4 hethyng.

L 581. 9 fol. 149 a / Regum primo in upper margin / were / 10 after the mydnyght / 11 There / noo course / 12 the were sure / ych a syde / — 582. 1 that / mylde / moode / 2 they slepand were / 3 thoghe they spyed / spyl / bloode / 4 theym / doo noo / 5 Bot / grete cup / goode / 6 also the kinges / chasing / 7 They tuke / euyn missing / agayne they yood / 8 dale they gun theym / 9 on that otre syde / 10 wher they noon / myght / 11 kenely cryde / 12 / Abnar wake / — 583. 1 Ye wirke as ye were childe ying / 2 that / king / slepes / sad / 3 Whilst / may bere a way / thing / 4 the Duke then of / þe missing / hering had / 5 as / hethyng / 6 cries thou / vnkunand lad / 7 suche noys thus / the king / 8 then Saul waked / 9 He / were vntrew / 10 thoo that wonned him with / 11 the voice wele / 12 that it Was / of missing.

584 And to wytt how yt was [begun],
 he cryde to hym *and* cald be name,
 »Is þou not Dauid, Iesse sun?»
 7000 »*zis certes*,» he sayd, »I am þe same.
 þis ylike nyȝt myȝt [þou me] haue [fun]
 In þi tent, wher þou haldest þi hame.
 yow both I myȝt haue bett *and* bun
and went my way with owtyn blame.
 7005 I toke þi coupe of gold
and bare þi spere þe fro
 And myȝt well, yf I wold,
 haue tane þi self also.

When the king asked if he was David, the son of Jesse, he answered that he was. David also described how the king had been at his mercy but had been spared again.

585 þerfor, *ser*, it were fayr to sesse
 7010 of swylk dedes os þou vses at do,
 And suffer me to passe in pese
 þat trypase noyȝt þe [vn]to.
 þou I[e]fes þe less[on]s þat ar lese
and waytys euer to werke me wo.
 7015 Now haue I mett þe twyse at mese;
 þou wot þi self [þat] yt is so.»
 The kyng sayd, »wele I knaw,
and here þe soth I se.
 þou dose all þat þou aw
 7020 in meknes vnto me.

David appealed to the king to leave him alone instead of always trying to do him harm. The king admitted that David was loyal to him.

fol. 66 b 586 And also I se well for certayn
 þou sal be kyng; þis is no nay.
 þerfor I graunt þe perdon playn
 7025 neuer forto dere þe aftur þis day.»
 þen Dauid of his fare was fayn,
 bott ferrer he fled for more affray.
 The cowpe *and* þe spere he sent agayn.
 ylkon at wyll þen [went] þer way.
 7030 The kyng abatyd his breth
 and toyȝt his werke not wyse;
 And Dauid went to geth,
 vnto [þe] kyng Achyse.

Saul promised not to do David any harm, but David fled and sent back the cup and the spear. When the king had calmed down, he thought that he had not acted wisely. David went to Achish, king of Gath.

S 584. 5 I þe / slayn / -- 585. 2 w cancelled after of / 5 lofes / lessens
 — 586. 2 salbe / 8 ware.

L 584. 1 wit how all was begonne / 2 cried / called by / 3 thou nocht / sonne /
 4 yis certes he says the / 5 This nyght myght thov haue me fonne / 6 in thy
 tent that thou / thy home / 7 You / myght have bet or bonne / 8 withouten /
 9 take thy cup / 10 thy / the / 11 myght / well missing / if I had wold / 12 have
 taken thy / — 585. 1 Therefore / tyme for to cesse / 2 such / as thou / to doo /
 3 suffre / pas / peace / 4 that trispast noo thing the vnto / 5 Thou leves the lessons
 that / lyes / 6 wates / wyrk / woo / 7 have / met the twys / 8 thou knaws thi /
 it / 9 king / knawe / 10 the soth / 11 Thou doos / that the awe / 12 mekenes / —
 586. 1 as / well omitted / certayne / 2 thou shal be king this / noo / 3 Therfor /
 the / playne / 4 the / this / 5 Then / this faire / fayne / 6 bot for / 7 cop / the /
 agayne / 8 ychoon / will then went their way / 9 king abated / 10 thought / werk
 / 11 Geth / 12 the king / Ca. xxvij in right margin.

King Achish, who was a Philistine, knew that David had been an enemy of his people. But now, since Saul and David were enemies, he believed that the latter would be true to the Philistines.

587 þe kyng Achyse þat I of meyne
was wyght enoght *and* wyse of were,
bott he was full [a] phylysteyn 7035
and his men in þe same manere.
he hard well how Daudid had bene
be fore abowt to do þem dere.
Bot now he wott *with* outyn we[n]e
kyng saul *and* he enmys ere. 7040
All yf he ware Ebrew,
sen þ[ei] his Enmys wore,
he trowde he suld be trew
to phylysteyns þerfore.

Achish gave David and his people land to live on and a great city, Ziklag. Thither he moved with his two wives and six hundred men. David honoured God always and flattered the Canaanites.

588 he gaf hym landes a lytill fra 7045
to loge hym *and* his pepyll in,
A grett Cete, Cissylla,
to hym *and* to hayrys of his kene.
ydder went he and his wyfes two,
and þer þei wuned *with* mekyll wyn, 7050
VI hunderth men *with* outyn [w]o
owt of the forest of Cephyn.
Semly þei soiournde þei,
Daudid *and* his Ebrews.
he honerd god all way 7055
and fayged þe [cananews].

But he was ready to do them evil. He went over the hill to Amalek and laid waste the country. Then he went to Scrris, where he took plenty of treasures. He gave Achish valuable gifts, pretending to have taken them from the Hebrews.

589 To brew þem bale bown wold he be.
ouer mownt he went to Malachis,
And þore he stroyd vp þat cuntre,
and sythyn he wentt vnto serrys. 7060
þer gatte þei gold full grett plente,
pellour *and* pyrry of grett pryse.
And grett presandes oft sythyes sent he
vnto þe kyng of geth, Achys.
Achys noyzt vnderstud 7065
what phylesteyns can fele.
Daudid sayd he gatt þat gud
of Ebrews ylka dele.

S 587. 7 were / 10 þat / — 588. 1 Three letters blotted, perhaps cancelled, before landes / 4 second to above the line / of his above the line / 7 mo / 12 phylysteyns, cf. *Kalén*, p. XIV.

L 587. 1 The king Achis that / mene / 2 wight enough / werre / 3 Bot / full omitted / a Philistiene / 4 the / maner / 5 He / wele / 6 before wyllyng to doo theym / 7 nowe / knew withouten wene / 8 king Saul / were / 9 Allthough / was Ebrew / 10 sith Saul his emny was / 11 He trowde / shuld / 12 Philistiens therfore / — 588. 1 He gave him / litle fro / 2 luge him / people / 3 And a grete Citee Sicelech / 4 to the heirs / kyn / 5 Thedre he went *with* / twoo / 6 there they Wonned / mekyll missing / Wyn / 7 Sex hundereth / withouten fayle / 8 oute / zephyn / 9 Surely there soiournde they / 11 honored / 12 faged the Philistiens / — 589. 1 theym / bowne / 2 mountans / Malichyse / 3 there / distroyde / vp omitted / that / 4 sith / soght / Serryse / 5 fol. 149 b / There gate they / full missing / grete / 6 pelure / peere / grete price / 7 grete / tymes / 8 Vnto the King of Geth Achis / 9 noght vndre stooode / 10 Philistiens gun / 11 gate that goode / 12 ych a.

590 þen was kyng Achis ferly fayn
 7070 þat he and Ebrews enmys ware.
 he trowd he wold neuer turne agayn
 so frenly als he was be fore.
 he sembyld [men] *with* all his mayn
 of all his landes, both lesse and more,
 7075 And sayd þe Ebrews suld be slayn,
and on lyfe suld he leue no store.
 1-1. 67 a he prayd Dauid als frend
 þat he and his meneȝe
 7080 *with* hym in were wold wend,
 and gladly grawnthed he.

King Achish was very glad that David and the Hebrews were enemies. He gathered men from all his lands, saying that the Hebrews should be slain. At his request David promised to go with him.

591 þen was full grett myrth þem o mell;
 þei styrd *and* wold no langer stand,
 Bot furth þei [fare] ouer fyrth *and* fell
 7085 *and* fullyd all þat þei be fore fand.
 when kyng saul herd tythynges tell
 þat phylsteyns enturd his land,
 he sayd þei suld not so[und]ly dwell.
 a full grett ost sone he ordand.
 A[nd] *with* þem all went he
 7090 *with* mekyll prese *and* pryde
 To þe mount of gylboy,
and þore he busked hym to byd.

With great joy they went forth, destroying all and everything. King Saul, on hearing the news, gathered a great host and went to mount Gilboa, where he intended to wait.

592 he myȝt se on þat hyll on heyght
 in þe low land what lyfe þei led:
 7095 Towns of fyre byrnand full bryȝt
and all ouer was *with* enmys spred.
 he saw þem mony and mekyll of myȝt;
 sum dele in hert he was a dred
 And prayd to god to schew sum syȝt
 7100 how þat he suld in þat stowre be sted,
 whedder his folke suld be flayd
 or ellys þer enmys slayn.
 bot how s[o] euer he prayd,
 he had no tokyn agayn.

He could see from the hill what was happening in the low land: towns burning, enemies everywhere. When he saw so many mighty enemies, the king was afraid. He prayed to God for a sign how the battle would end, but there was none.

S 590. 4 *Next line but two* (And sayd . . . slayn) *cancelled after fore* / — **591.** 7 sodanly / 8 gt *cancelled before grett* / 9 All / 12 abyd / — **592.** 11 sum.

L 590. 1 Then / king / fayne / 2 that / were / 3 He trowed / agayne / 4 frendly as / before / 5 He sembled men / all *omitted* / mayne / 6 land / les / 7 said the / shuld / slayne / 8 'and' *omitted* / life shuld / leve noo / 9 He / as frende / 10 that / menye / 11 With him / werre / wende / 12 *graunted* / — **591.** 1 Ca. xxviiij *in left margin* / Then / grete mirth theym omell / 2 they styrd / lenger / 3 they fare / firth / 4 fuld / that before theym they fand / 5 When king Saul / tithinges / 6 that Philistiens entered / 7 He said they shuld / sovndly / 8 grete oste / 9 And / theym / 10 mych / 11 the Mount / Gelboe / 12 there / purpost / hym *missing* / abyde / — **592.** 1 He myght / that hill / hight / 2 the logh / they / 3 Townes on fire birmand / bryght / 4 ouer all was his / 5 He / theym many / mych / myght / 7 shew / syght / 8 þat *missing* / shuld / that stoure / 9 Whethre / shuld / flayde / 10 elles their / slayne / 11 Bot so euer / 12 noo tokenyng agayne.

His prophets also prayed for him, but no help came. He knew then that God was displeased with something he had done. He bade his men find a witch by whose craft a dead man could be made to foretell his fate. A man said there was such a woman in Endor.

- 593 his prophett[es] also for hym pray[s]; 7105
 of h[elpe] vnto hym herd þei noyȝt.
 þen wýst he well þat god not pay[s]
 sum werkyng þat he has wrought.
 he bad his men go dyuerse ways
 þat sum wyche sone to [hym] ware soyght, 7110
 þat by hyr craft coud ded men rays
 þat sum body be lyue ware broyȝt
 To tell how he suld chefe,
 awder lyfe or ellys be sloyne.
 One sayd, »lord, with your lefe 7115
 In Endor dwels swylke one.

The king went to her secretly and offered her plenty of gold if she could raise some dead body to say whether he should fight or flee. Through her witchcraft and the devil's assistance Samuel was made to rise.

- 594 Scho con by craft of socery
 tell all þat euer in erthe sal be.»
 The kyng went to hyr preuely
 and bed hyr gold, full grett plente, 7120
 To rase hym vp sum ded body,
 to say whedder he suld fyght or fle.
 Scho aske[d] in whom he wold affy.
 »In samuel, forsoth», says hee.
 Sone thurgh hyr soceris 7125
 and thurgh þe fendes rede
 Samuel scho gart vp ryse,
 þat lang whyle had bene dede.

Samuel said that next morning Saul and his sons would dwell in the same manner as himself. Then Samuel disappeared. But the king regretted that he had gone there.

- 595 Als samuel stud þem be forne,
 þe kyng sayd, »tell vs, or we twyn, 7130
 whedder syd sal be vp born
 in þis batell þat we be gyne,
 And who sall haue þer lyuys lorn!»
 þen answerd he with dedly dyne, 7135
 »þou and þi suns sall wun to morn
 in þe same wyse þat I wun In.»
 þen was he hent in hy fol. 67 b
 a way, þei wýst not whore.
 kyng saul þen was sory;
 hym rewed þat he come þore. 7140

S 593. 1 prayd / 2 hym / 3 god was not payd / 4 of sum / 6 wyche above wythe cancelled / þem / 11 And cancelled after One, which is in left margin / — 594. 2 salbe / — 595. 3 salbe.

L 593. 1 His prophetes / prays / 2 helpe to / hard they noght / 3 Then wist / wele that god not pays / 4 of omitted / werk that / 5 He / goo diuers / 6 that / wyth / were to hym soght / 7 That / hire crafte couth deid / 8 that / belyve were broght / 9 shuld cheeve / 10 avthre lyve / elles / slayne / 11 Oon / lorde / youre leeve / 12 Wones such oone / — 594. 1 She kan / 2 that / erth shal bee / 3 king / hire preuely / 4 hight / hyr missing / grete / 5 rais him / so deid / 6 wethre / shuld fight / 7 She asked / whome / 8 in Samuel for soth sayd he / 9 hir soceryse / 10 the / reide / 11 she made / 12 that long while / ben deide / — 595. 1 As Samuel stoothe theym before / 2 the king say / 3 Whether syde shall / borne / 4 this / that / begyn / 5 shal have their lives forlorne / 6 then / deidly dyn / 7 Thou / thy sonnes shal wonne / morne / 8 the / woones that / wonne / 9 Then / 10 away they / where / 11 King Saul / þen omitted / 12 him / that / there.

596 he teldyd hym *with* in his tent
 on gylboy batell for to abyde.
 Now leue we hym wher he is lent
and tell how Dauid con be tyde.
 7145 kyng aches boldly borows brent
and stroyd Cytes on ylka syde.
 Dauid ay wy[ght]ly *with* hym went;
 no[n] was so well arayd þat tyde.
 7150 þe phylysteyns ware not payd
 þat he suld *with* þem wun.
 ylke on tyll *oper* sayd,
 »ys noyȝt þis gesse sun?

He shut himself up in his tent waiting for the battle. But let us now hear what happened to David. King Achish destroyed towns and cities; with him went David, well equipped. The Philistines were displeased: »Is this not the son of Jesse?»

597 *with* kyng saul he ys at hame
and of his howshold hath bene lang.»
 7155 Sum *oper* says, »þis is the same
 þat maydys made of in þer sang.»
 »Syr kyng,» þei say, »we ar to blame,
 and he *with* vs to batell gang.
 his awn kyng wyll he kepe from schame
and turn to mell hym vs amang.
 7160 The more þat he [us] shendes,
 þe more thanke sall he haue.
 So sall þei bee full frendes.
 þerfor se vs to saue!»

They pointed out that he had long been of Saul's household and that he had been praised by the maidens in their song. David would, they said, keep his own king from harm and finally they would be great friends again.

7165 598 kyng aches saw his folke afrayd;
 Of Dauid fare þei ware not fayn.
 þerfor þus to hym he sayd,
 »I thanke þe, ser, *with* all my mayn
 þat þou þus prestly is purved,
 7170 bot now I pray þe turn agayn
 And see my reme be ryȝt arayd.
 I graunt þe heyre my power playn.»
 þen Dauid home can fare,
 all ware yt not his wyll.
 7175 Bot lang or he com þore,
 new tythynges com hym tyll.

When Achish saw his people's fear, he thanked David for his services and asked him to return to look after his kingdom. David went back, much against his will. It was not long before news came to him.

S 596. 5 brorows / 7 wyttely / — **597.** 9 was / — **598.** 3 to he to / 10 Cf. 767: 2.

L 596. 1 He teldid him within / 2 Gelboe / for *missing* / 3 leyve / him where / 4 gun betyde / 5 Ca. xxix in left margin / King Achis / Burghes / 6 stroyed Cites / ych a / 7 wightly / him / 8 noone / wele arayd to ryde / 9 The Philistiens wer / 10 that / shuld / theym wonne / 11 Ychoon to othre covth say / 12 is not this Iesse sonne / — **597.** 1 fol. 150 a / Regum primo in top margin / With / Saul / is / home / 2 houshald has ben / 3 othre / this / 4 that madyns ment / their / 5 Sir king they / 7 His / king wolle / help for shame / 8 turne hym to succur vs amang / 9 that / vs / 10 the / thank / shal / have / 11 shal they be / 12 therfore see / save / — **598.** 1 Kyng Achis / affrayd / 2 fair they were / fayne / 3 And therfor thus / him / 4 the / mayne / 5 That thou thus / ar purvayd / 6 the turne agayne / 7 se / Reaume / right arrayd / 8 graunt the here / powere playne / 9 Then / gun fare / 10 allthough it was / 11 long / come there / 12 tithing come him vntyll.

The Amalekites knew full well that everybody had gone to war, and went fiercely against Ziklag. After burning and destroying everything they carried away David's two wives, and others of his household were in an evil plight.

- 599 Amalachys we ment of ayre,
 þat Dauid angerd oft be fore,
 þei wyst full well how þat þei ware
 went to were, both lesse *and* mare. 7180
 þerfor full fersly con þei fayre
 to Cesilla, whore his wyfes ware.
 þor forto sp[oyle] wold þei not spare;
 þei brent *and* stroyde vp all þer store.
 þei toke his wyfes two 7185
and home with þem þei lede.
 And of his meneze moo
 wore þor full stratly sted.

David had never before been so distressed. His household also had great sorrow for the loss of their wives. They said they would never go home until they had shed the blood of their enemies. David prayed to God for comfort and was advised to go and overcome his foes.

- 600 Dauid was neuer ayre so wo;
 no wounder yf he wex nere wode 7190
 when þat he wyst his wyfes two
 war led away with all þer gud.
 hys meneze made mornynge also, fol. 68 a
 be cawse þer wyfes with þem zode.
 þei sayd þei suld neuer ha[m]werd go 7195
 or þei had schamly sched þer blode.
 Dauid prayd god to send
 sum comforth in þat case.
 he had wernynge to wend
and well ouercom his fayse. 7200

On their way they met one of the Amalekites who could not escape for want of food. David promised him his life if he could tell him the best policy to be adopted. He showed David the way to the Amalekites.

- 601 To fell þem down full fast þei thrett,
and furth þei cayred to þat cuntre.
 On of þo Malachys þei mett
 þat [for mete] myzt no ferreur flee.
 To haue his hele Dauid hym hett 7205
 to tell hym how þe best myzt bee.
 he sayd, »ser, I sall þe sett
 whor þou þe malachys may see.»
 hee wysched þem redy way
 tyll þei had knawynge clere 7210
 whore all þer enmys lay,
 makand full mery chere.

S 599. 7 speke / 10 þem þem / — 600. 7 D cancelled before first þei / hanwerd / — 601. 4 forthermer.

L 599. 1 Amelachise / ere / 2 that / angered / before / Ca. xxx in right margin / 3 They wist / wel / that they were / 4 werre / les / more / 5 Therfor / gun they / 6 Sicelech wher / wywes were / 7 There / spoyle / they / spayre / 8 they stroyd and brent / their / 9 They tuke / wywes away / two omitted / 10 and to their land theym led / 11 And othre moo than they / 12 were there / strately / — 600. 1 was full of woo / 2 noo woundre thogh / woode / 3 When that / wist / wywes twoo / 4 were / a way / their goode / 5 His menye maid mourning / 6 bycause their wywes / them yooode / 7 They / they shuld / homeward goo / 8 they / shamely shed their bloode / 10 that / 11 He hade warnynge / 12 well missing / ouercome / foes / — 601. 1 theym downe / they / 2 they goo / that cuntree / 3 Oon / the Malichise they / 4 that for mete might noo farther / 5 haue / heale / him / 6 the / myght be / 7 And he / shal the / 8 where thou the Malachyse / se / 9 He wysched theym / Way / 10 to they / knowynge / 11 wher / their / 12 makynge.

- 602 þei made þen myrth *with* all þer mayn
and trowed þat n[o] man myȝt þem marre.
 7215 þen Dauid *and* his folke was fayn
and toyȝt þat þei suld fownd no ferre.
 þei pressed to þem *in* þat playn
and so *with* skelppis þei con þem scarre
 þat sodanly þore ware þei slayn.
 7220 full ioyfull all þe ebrews arre.
 þer wyfes þen þei ta
and gold full grett plente.
 And went to Cecilla;
 þat was þer awn Cyte.
- 7225 603 Now at þer lyst we leue þem so
with Dauid þat of were was wyse,
 And telle we of þe hostes two
 on Gylboy, whore kyng saul lyse.
 ffull gretly þei to geydder go
 7230 to se what syde suld wyn þe price.
 þe phylsteyns ware mony moo
 þat wer comyn *with* kyng Achys.
 ffull boldly þei abyde
and bett on *with* brandes bryȝt.
 7235 And ebrews on þer syde
 full fersly fandyd to fyȝt.
- 604 To tell how all þat werkyng was,
 lyne be lyne, full lang yt were.
 7240 þe Ebrews all þe ouerhand hays
 fro morn to mydday *and* more;
 bot at þe last þei sayd alas
 for lordes þat leued þer lyfes þore
 And most for gentyll Ionatas,
 þat Dauid fand his frend be fore.
 7245 he had stroyd in þat sted
 phylsteyns full gud woynе,
 And sythyn he was ded
 and his breyþer ylkon.

The Amalekites were making merry, believing nobody could harm them. David and his men attacked and slew them. Full of joy the Hebrews took their wives and plenty of gold, whereupon they returned home.

Let us now leave David and tell of the two armies at Gilboa. They fought very fiercely, but the Philistines were superior in numbers. They attacked with bright swords; the Hebrews, too, fought fiercely.

The Hebrews had the upper hand from morning till noon and longer, but in the end they be-moaned their dead lords, more especially David's friend, the gentle Jonathan. After he had killed a great many Philistines, he and his brothers were killed.

S 602. 2 ne / — 603. 3 *Second e of telle inserted above the line.*

L 602. 1 They / þen omitted / their mayne / 2 that noo / myght theym mare / 3 Then / wer fayne / 4 thocht that they shuld goo noo far / 5 They presed vnto theym / that playne / 6 skelpes they gun theym skare / 7 That / there were they slayne / 8 Ioyfull / the Ebrews ar / 9 Their wyves / þen omitted / they take agayne / 10 grete plentee / 11 wendes / Sicelech / 12 that / their / Citee / — 603. 1 their lust / leyve theym soo / 2 that / werre / Ca. xxxj *in right margin* / 3 tell / the ostes twoo / 4 Gelboe where king Saul / 5 egyrle they / gedre goo / 6 shuld / the pryse / 7 The Philistiens wer many moo / 8 that were comen / Achyse / 9 they did abyde / 10 bet on basynetys bright / 11 Ebrews / their / 12 fersly there did fight / — 604. 1 all how that wirkyng / 2 long it / 3 The / the / has / 4 morne vnto / there / and more omitted / 5 Bot / the / they / allas / 6 that were slayn theym before / 7 fro / Ionathas / 8 that / frende euermore / 9 fol. 150 b / He hade stroyde / that stede / 10 of Philistiens many oon / 11 sith hym selfe was deid / 12 brothre ychoon.

When Saul saw that
his son and the chief
(flower?) of his chivalry
had been killed, he
preferred being slain to
living in lawless com-
pany. Therefore he ask-
ed one of his men to
kill him, but the man
refused to do any harm
to his king.

605 when saul saw þat his sun was gone
and chefe of all his cheualry, 7250
And how he þore was leued alon fol. 68 b
and had no beld to byde hym by,
well leuer he had forto haue bene sloyn
þen lyfe in lawles cumpany.
þerfor of his men bad he on 7255
putt hym to ded þor preuely
So þat he past no ferre
with folke of fals lyuyng.
þat man wold noyȝt hym marre
by cause he was his kyng. 7260

The king was about
to run himself through
with his own sword,
when there came a young
man of the kin of Cain.
At Saul's request he
gave the king his death-
wound and received
Saul's crown and brace-
let as payment. Thus
ended the first king of
the Hebrews, because
he broke God's law.

606 with his awn sword he con be gyn
to styke hym self in þat stound.
So com A knaue of kaym kyn;
þe kyng sayd, »felow, or þou found,
Beyr me thugh, for no thyng blyn, 7265
and take my crown and my be rownde!»
þe knaue was glad þat gold to wyn
and gaf þe kyng his dedes wounde.
þus ended þe fyrst kyng
þat euer was of Ebrew, 7270
ffor he brake goddes bedyng
and was not to hym trew.

Such an end was fit-
ting for him, because he
had killed many priests
and shown disobedience
to God's will. The Phil-
istines rejoiced and
worshipped their idols
all the more.

607 Swylke cayre behoued cum hym tyll
for marterdoms þat he dyd make —
Byschopes and prestes both he gart spyll 7275
and dekyns als for Daudid sake —
And for he wroyȝt not goddes wyll
þat cumaund hym he suld take wrake
Of kyng agag, þat greued hym yll,
and to trews he con hym take. 7280
þat day ware Ebrews slayn,
als samuel sayd be fore.
Phyllysteyns ware full fayn;
mawmentes þei wrschept þe more.

S 605. 2 chefe cf. 724: 7 and Allit. *Morte Arthure* 18, ed. Björkman | —
606. 6 berownde | — 607. 1 w cancelled before tyll | 6 at of þat above the line.

L 605. 1 When Saul | þat omitted | sonnes were goone | 2 and the chief | che-
ualry | 3 there | leyved alloone | 4 'and' omitted | withouten belde | abyde him | 5
Wele | haue omitted | be slayne | 6 than lyve | company | 7 Therfor | oone | 8 put
| deid there prevely | 9 that | noght far | 10 lyffyng | 11 That | not him mar | 12
because | — 606. 1 With | swerd | gun begyn | 2 styk him selfe | that stownd |
3 come a knave | Camys | 4 the king said ffellay | thou fownd | 5 Bere | noo |
6 myn corone | bee rownd | 7 Saul *interfectus est super montem Gelboe cum tribus
filiis suis on left side* | The knave | the | 8 gave the king | deid wownd | 9 Thus |
the first | 10 that | 11 biddyng | 12 Was | — 607. 1 Suche cares behoued come |
vntill | 2 martirdomes that | did | 3 Byshopes | made he spyll | 4 Dekens also | 5
for omitted | wroght | godes | 6 that comaund him | shuld | 7 Agag that greved |
ill | 8 vnto | gun | 9 That | were | slayne | 10 as Samuel | before | 11 Philistiens
were | fayne | 12 they honored theyre mawmentȝ the more.

7285 608 Sone on þe morn þei sessyd not ʒett
 or dede bodes spoiled bee.
 kyng saul hed þei haue of cutt
and þe same of his suns all thre.
 on þer Cete þei haue sett yt
 7290 þat folke on ylka syd suld see,
 And for þei wold all þe werld suld wyt
 of þer Iornay in gylboy.
 To sere Cytes þei sentt
 qwerters of lordes be l[a]de
 7295 To mak yt be on ment
 þe maystrys þat þei þore made.

They cut off the heads of King Saul and his sons and set them up in the city so that everybody should know about their campaign in Gilboa. They also sent the quartered bodies of the lords round to several cities to make known their gallant feats.

609 By cawse kyng saul þus was slayn,
 phylsteyns made grett sacrafyce.
 7300 his armurs offerd þei ylkon
 to Astrott, þer god of price.
 Sythyn Ebrews with grett hand ar gone
 to þo Cytes be certan spyse.
 Both hed[es] *and* bodes haue þei ton
and bered þem in þer best wyse,
 7305 with grett wrschep all ways,
 for þei so worthy wore,
 601. 69. a And made sorowyng seuyn days,
 als costum þen was þore.

Great sacrifices were offered by the Philistines to celebrate the death of Saul. His armour was offered to Ashtaroth. But the Hebrews took away both heads and bodies and buried them with great honour. There was seven days' mourning, as was their custom.

610 When kyng saul [was] went his way,
 7310 XX ʒeres þen regnyd [had] hee.
 And whyls he lufed god *and* his lay,
 he had lykyng by land *and* see.
 þer lyfed non ayre aftur his day;
 þe prophett sayd yt suld so be.
 7315 The fyrst boke endes in this aray
 þat tels how kyng[es] come in cuntree.
 ffor[t]her who lykys to loke
 how was with dauid done,
 Seke in the second boke;
 7320 þer þei sall see full soyne.

King Saul had reigned for twenty years. As long as he loved God and His law, he had been happy. He left no heir, as foretold by the prophet. Thus ends the first book. Whoever wants to know how David fared, may look in the second book.

S 608. 5 of cancelled before þei / 10 lede / — 609. 10 vnworthy / — 610. 1 h cancelled before When / 4 he has -d cancelled in MS. / 8 to in / 9 ffor heyr.

L 608. 1 the morne they cessed / yitt / 2 deid bodies spoiled was / 3 King Saul heved they / haue omitted / kytt / 4 the / sonnes / all omitted / 5 On their Cite they / haue omitted / set itt / 6 that / yche a syde myght se / 7 And omitted / ffor they / the world shuld witt / 8 their iornay on Gelboe / 9 Cites they sent / 10 quarters / to be layde / 11 make it / 12 the maistres there they mayde / — 609. 1 Because king Saul thus / slayne / 2 Philistiens / grete sacrifice / 3 His armors offred they ichoone / 4 Astraot their / 5 Sith / grete / goone / 6 þo omitted / Cites by certayne spyes / 7 hevedes / bodies have they taken / 8 beryd them on their / 9 With grete worship allways / 10 they / worthy were / 11 soroyng vij days / 12 as custome then / there / — 610. 1 Saul was went / 2 twenty yeres then reigned had he / 3 And omitted / Ay whilst / lawe / 4 hade / se / 5 There leyved noon heire after / 6 the prophet / it shuld / 7 first booke / array / 8 that telles / kynges reigned in / 9 fforthere / likes / luke / 10 Dauid doone / 11 secunde booke / 12 there shal they / soone.

Liber Secundus Regum.

In the Second Book of Kings we shall hear of David and his doings. In Ziklag, where he was living, no news reached him about what had happened, until the third day. He was dismayed.

611 In the fyrst boke of kynges herd haue we
 how saul was fyrst crowned kyng,
 And how he dyed on gylboý
 with his ost outrayd, old *and* ðyng.
 Now in the secund sall we see 7325
 of Dauid *and* of his doying.
 In Cesilla þen soiornd he,
 and of þat werke wýst he no thyng
 Tyll aftur on the thryd day
 þen come a messynger, 7330
 And swylke saws con he say
 þat chaunged all his chere.

When David heard that Saul and his three sons were dead, his heart became heavy as lead. The messenger described how Saul had asked him to slay him, because he had not strength enough himself.

612 »Ser», he sayd, »be mery I rede,
 for gud thynges sall I tell þe.
 kyng saul þin enmy is dede; 7335
 I saw hym sloyn *and* his suns thre.»
 þe[n] Dauid hert wex heuy as lede.
 he sayd, »how wott þou yt suld so be?»
 he sayd, »[from] Iews in the same sted;
 þe certan seyngs þat sall þou see. 7340
 hym self he wold haue slayn;
 so was he stede in nede.
 And for he had no mayn,
 he prayd me do þat dede.

As hire he had received the king's golden bracelets and crown. When David had heard the man's story, he looked upon him with anger and said that he should have his reward for killing the anointed king. Then he smote off his head.

613 I wýst yt was his awn desyre; 7345
 to beyre hym through I was full bowne
 And haue here þat I haue to hyre,
 hys bees of gold *and* his gud crownne.
 I wott þou sal be lord *and* syre
 And rewle þe reme, both [towre *and* 7350
 town].»
 þen dauid loked on hym with yre
and sayd, »þou sall haue waryson.
 he was enoynted kyng,
 þat þou dyde swylke dyspytte.»
 without more doying 7355
 hys hede he dyde of smytt.

S 611. 1 I n / 8 þen wýst / — 612. 4 'and' cancelled before I / 7 a written above between w and s in Iews / — 613. 5 'ser' cancelled before syre / 6 MS. town 'and' towre.

L 611. Leaf 151 of MS. L lost, comprising 611—626: 4.

- fol. 69^b 614 ffull oft he syghtyd *and* sayd alas
 þat euer kyng saul suld ende so,
 Bot more for gentyll Ionatas.
 7360 when he yt wyst, þen was he woe,
 ffor trewer luf in werld ne was
 þen euer was be twyx þem two.
 þerfor slyke care in hert he has;
 ne he wyst in werld what he myȝt do.
 7365 he swouned, als he wold swelt,
and weped *and* wrang his h[e]nd.
 lang with swylke doyles he delȝ;
 no man myȝt hym amend.

The loss of Jonathan was a terrible blow to David. Never was there truer love than between those two. David was inconsolable. He swooned as if he were going to die, wept and wrung his hands.

- 615 Tyll at the last a Duke hym dyȝt
 7370 to bryng his bale in bettur g[u]yse.
 he says, »yt is no semly syȝt
 men forto werke on swylke a wyse.
 yt is well fayrrer forto fyght
and venge vs on our yll enmyse.
 7375 So suld acord to ylka knyȝt;
 with wepyng sall neuer wrschepe ryse.
 yt falys wemen of eld
 to wepe, when þei haue wrang,
 And knyghtes to fyght in feld
 7380 þe[r] foys with fors to fang.»

At last a duke inter-vened. He said it would be more fitting to fight and take vengeance on one's enemies than behave like an old woman. No glory ever came from weeping.

- 616 þen sayd þei so on ylka syde
and cachyd myrth so þem a mell.
 he trowed þer tayles in þat tyde
and prayd to god þat he wold þem tell
 7385 where hym ware best to beld *and* byd.
 And goddes prophett bad hym go dwell
 In Ebron, a Cety long *and* wyd,
 with chosyn chylder of israhel.
 The kynred of Iuda
 7390 þor chose hym forto þer kyng
 All way well or wo
 to lyfe at his ledyng.

Then they said so all round him. He believed what they said and prayed to God for advice. God's prophet told him to go to Hebron. There he was chosen king of Judah.

614. 10 MS. hand / — 615. 2 MS. gryse / 12 MS. þei / — 616. 10 MS. he chose.

When David had become king by popular acclamation, he ruled over poor and rich with justice. His cousin Joab was made chief of his chivalry and next under him were his brothers Asahel and Abishai. The eldest of the Hebrews he held to be of the best counsel, but he trusted them all.

617 Now wex Dauid A man of myȝt
 when he was kyng by comyn crye.
 The pure *and* ryche rewled ryȝt, 7395
 aftur þer werkyng was worthy.
 hys cosyn Ioab, a gentyll knyht,
 made he chefe of his cheualry
 And next hym his two breþer, þat heyȝt
 Aȝaell *and* abaȝai. 7400
 Ay þe eldyst of Ebrew
 held he of þe most counsell,
 Qwyll all he trest for trew
and wold not fayntly fayle.

When Saul had been killed in battle, Duke Abner was left to rule his land so that no harm should come to Ishbosheth, the son of Saul. He and Abner were angry that David had become king of Judah. They cast about

618 We told be fore and not full ferre 7405
 how kyng saul was feld [in] feyld.
 At home was left Duke Abnarre
 his land *and* his welth to weld
 so þat none suld *with* maystry marre fol. 70 a
 ysboset, saul sun vn weld. 7410
 he and þat Duke yll angerd arre
 þat Dauid so was broyȝt to beld.
 þei hard how he was kyng
 of þe kynred of Iuda;
 þat toyȝt þem herd hethyng 7415
and kest be twen þem twa

how they could overthrow him. They assembled all King Saul's men and made Ishbosheth king of Israel. When Joab heard of their plans, he and his brothers made themselves ready.

619 how þei myȝt turne all þat entent,
and þus þei ordand þem omell:
 þei sembled all to þer assent
 þat *with* saul ware wunt to dwell. 7420
 þat ysbosett þen haue þei hent
and made hym [kyng] of israhel;
 And forto marre so haue þei ment
 kyng Dauid *and* his force to fell.
 When Ioab herd of þo 7425
 and of þer purpase playn,
 he and his breyþer two
 grathed þem þor a gayn.

618. 1 We told above two words blotted out | 2 MS. 'and' | 4 This line written below the next but one cancelled (ysbosett . . . weld) | 6 yseb cancelled before ysboset | — 619. 8 kynd corrected to kyng.

- 620 Duke Ioab hath for Daud heyght
 7430 to feyght in feld *and* not to flee.
 Duke Abnarre says for ysbotssett
 in batell sall he byde *and* bee.
 Bot both þer men, when þei ware mett,
 ware ebrews *and* of on cuntree.
 7435 þerfor to were wyll þei not lett
 tyll þat þei wytt who sall wyn degre.
 fful fersly þen þei fyȝt.
 bot to [t]ell at þe last:
 Abnare was put to flyght,
 7440 and Ioab fowled fast.

Joab had promised to fight for David and Abner for Ish-bosheth. Their men, who were Hebrews and from the same country, would not cease fighting until the battle was decided. At last Abner fled and Joab pursued him hotly.

- 621 And als þei persewede þore,
 ware mony dede *with* owtyn drede.
 Bot Aȝaell was ay be fore,
 for þore hade he so wyght a stede.
 7445 when Abnare saw he sewed so sore
and to his hele wold take no hede,
 he prayd hym to persew no more,
 and he suld gyf hym gold to mede.
 þerfor he wold not lett,
 7450 ne for his spekyng spare.
 And Abnare on hym sett
and through his brest hym bare.

Asahel was always foremost among the pursuers because he had such a good horse. Abner asked him to stop pursuing, and offered him gold as compensation. But Asahel refused and was killed by Abner.

- 622 when Ioab saw þat sory syȝt:
 his broþer lyg dede on þe land,
 7455 þen dyde he all his mayn *and* myȝt
 to venge his ded *with* hert *and* hand.
 And by þat was yt nere þe nyȝt,
and no tyme to be traueland.
 Duke Abanare toke a hyll on hyght
 7460 *and* gatt a strengh in forto stand.
 And þen for peyce he prayd
 to Ioab *and* his men.
 fol. 70 b »we werke all wrang», he sayd,
 »þat sall ȝe derly kene.»

Joab decided to avenge his brother's death. Night was near and there was no time to proceed further. Abner took up his position on a hill and asked Joab and his men for peace.

620. 10 MS. fell / 11 MS. putto / — 622. 11 we before he cancelled.

Abner said to Joab that he ought to fight Philistines and heathens instead of his own people. Cousins and kinsmen were assembled on both sides, and the more of them were killed, the greater the injury.

- 623 »Ioab», he sayd, »full well I know . 7465
 a feller knyzt may no man fynde.
with phylysteyns to fyght þe aw
 and *with* paynymys þat þei ben pynd.
 Bot we þat lyf all by a law
 and all are Ebrews of on kynd 7470
 ylkon to bryng oþer a Daw,
 we suld haue god more in *our* mynd.
 Both Cosyns and kynred
 ar ssembled on ayder syde.
 þe mo þat þus ar dede, 7475
 þe more tene sall vs be tyde.

What had happened to Joab's brother might befall Joab or Abner himself. Therefore they ought to cease hostilities. When Joab saw that Abner was right, he turned his men round and rested there that night.

- 624 I prayd þi broþer of peyce
 when he persewed me *with* enuy.
 Bot for my saws he wold not sesse
 and fell so through his awn foly. 7480
 So myzt fall þe same messe
 þi self to suffur or perchaunce I.
 þerfor yt is fayrest forto sese,
 and ylk man kepe his cumpany.»
 qwen Ioab saw certayn 7485
 he sayd reson and ryzt,
 hee turned his men agayn
 and rested þore þat nyzt.

Next morning they mourned over the fallen. Asahel was buried with due honour. No tongue can describe the grief that David felt over his death. King David had in Hebron six wives and several sons: Absalom, Adonijah, and others.

- 625 Bot on þe morn þei morwnd omell
 for folke þat þei fand fallyn in feld. 7490
 þei beyred þe body of azaell
with all þe wrschep þat þei myzt weld.
 when kyng Dauid herd how yt fell
 þat azael was schent on feld,
 his tene in hert no tong myzt tell, 7495
 for he was [all way] hym to beld.
 kyng Dauid had in Ebron
 VI wyfes *with* hym to go,
 And sere suns: Absolon,
 Adony and oþer moo. 7500

623. 1 well above the line | — 624. 7 s cancelled before yt | 8 letter cancelled before kepe | 12 word cancelled before rested | — 625. 2 feld above the line | 8 MS. ouer.

626 Sone aftur þis þen fell Debate
 be twyx ysboset *and* abnare,
 ffor he had takyn A leman latt
 þat *with* saul be fore con [fare].
 7505 he sayd yt fell not for his astate
 to vse wemen þat *with* kynges ware.
 Abnare in hert þen con hym hatt,
 þat chalenged hym for swylk a chare.
 he says, »euyñ als I broyðt
 7510 þe folke to wun hym wyth,
 So sall I sett þer toyðt
and turne þem to Dauid.»

Ish-bosheth upbraided Abner for taking a concubine that had earlier belonged to Saul. This did not befit a person in his humble position. Abner was very angry and said that he would now turn the people to David.

627 And sone vnto þe same entent
 letturs dyde he to wrytyng.
 7515 And messyngers sone hath he sent
 vnto Dauid, of Iuda kyng.
 fol. 71 a he told hym holy how he ment
 vnder his b[un]dom forto bryng
 All þe Ebrews þat *with* saul went,
 7520 fro ysbosett, both old *and* ðyng.
 Kyng Dauid was full glade
 when þei told þis tythyng,
 And sayd *with* sembland sade,
 »he sall haue his askyng.»

He sent letters to that effect to King David, who was very glad of this news. He said that Abner should have what he wanted.

7525 628 And forto *proue* be reson ryfe
 yf he þis *purpasse* wold persew,
 he sayd, »send Mycoll, my fayrest wyfe,
 þat homly is of hyd *and* hew.
 I luf hyr lely as my lyfe
 7530 sen fyrst þat I þat cumly knew.
 yf he do þis to stynt all stryfe,
 þen wyll I trest þat all be trew.»
 þe messyngers ar wentt
 to abnare euyñ agayn,
 7535 And Mycoll sone was sent,
and Dauid þen was fayn.

But David wanted proof of the sincerity of Abner's proposal and told him to send him Michal, David's fairest wife, whom he had always loved dearly. Abner did so.

S 626. 4 dwell / 7 con he / — 627. 6 bomdom / — 628. 4 letter cancelled before of.

L 626. 5 fol. 152 a / Regum secundo in top margin / He said it / 6 women that / kinges were / 7 Abner / hart then gun hym hate / 8 to chaulange / suche / 9 He / even as / broght / 10 the / wonne / with / 11 shal / set their thought / 12 them / — 627. 1 this / 2 letters did / 3 messingers / has / 5 He / trewly as he / 6 vndre hys gouernaunce / 7 the / that / Saul / 8 hisboseth / ðing / 9 King / gladd / 10 þei omitted / told was this thyng / 11 semblant sadd / 12 shuld / — 628. 1 forto omitted / prove by reason / 2 if / this purpose / purswe / 3 He / michol / first / 4 that is faire / hyde / hewe / 5 lufe hire / 6 sith first tyme that I hire knewe / 7 If / doo this / 8 then wolle / trust that / trewe / 9 The messingers / went / 10 agayne even to Abner / 11 Michol / 12 'and' omitted / that was king Dauid fere.

Abner called together the lords of the land and told them that it was God's will that David should be king of all Hebrews. So had Samuel prophesied. Abner himself wanted to live with David, and the assembly too declared for him.

629 Abnare þis forward wold fulfyll.
 full sone he gart to geydder call
 lordes of þe land, both lowd *and* styll,
 þat oght myȝt gouern grett or small. 7540
 he sayd, »sers, tentes vnto my skyll;
 þe certan soth say yow I sall.
 I wott well yt is goddes wyll
 þat Dauid be kyng of ebrews all.
 þe prophett samuel 7545
 sayd yt suld so be,
 And *with* hym wyll I dwell.»
 þei say, »ser, so wyll we.

Twenty of the best barons were brought before King David and paid homage to him. Thus all the twelve tribes were united under David. At the great feast that David gave, Abner was most honoured next to the king himself.

630 *with* hym to pase ware [w]e prest,
 had we not bene at þi bydyng.» 7550
 þen twenty barons of þe best
 be for kyng Dauid con he bryng.
 A fyrn sewrty þore þei fest
and made hym homage, old *and* ȝyng.
 so were all þe XII kynredes kest 7555
with hym to hold *and* [h]e þer kyng.
 Grett fest þan mad he þore
 by cause of kynredes twelfe,
 Bot Abnare ay be fore
 was honerd next hym selfe. 7560

Joab had been away from the city. When he came back and heard of the feast, he was not pleased at all. He wished to put an end to Abner's career because he hoped himself to be near the king.

631 *when* all was wele, þei went þer ways,
 ylkon to þer awn cuntre.
 Ioab, þe Duke, was all þer days
 for errandes fare fro þat Cety.
when he come *and* herd how men says 7565
 of fest *and* grett solempnite,
 þat purpas no thyng to hym pays:
 þat Abnare suld so neightbur be.
 he hoped he suld be nare 7570
 vnto the kyng all way.
 þat mater wyll he marre
 in all þat euer he may.

S 629. 3 of all / 4 small above the line / — 630. 1 þei / 8 be / — 631. 8 suld go / 9 In upper margin liber ihus Regum, with j cancelled before ihus.

L 629. 1 Abner this / fullfyll / 2 made to gedre / 3 Lordes / all omitted / that / lovde / 4 that / myght gouerne grete and / 5 He said seris tent / 6 the certayne / yow / shall / 7 wote wele it / godes / 8 that / Ebrews / 9 The prophet Samuell / 10 said it shuld / 11 Wolle / 12 they / Ser / wolle / — 630. 1 With / passe ay were we / 2 thy byddyng / 3 Then / barones / the / 4 before / gun / 5 firme fewtee there they / 6 made to hym / ying / 7 So / the twelf kyndreds / 8 hald / he their / 9 Grete feste then made / there / 10 because / kynred twelf / 11 Abner / before / 12 honored / self / — 631. 1 they / their / 2 ychoone / their / 3 the / thes / 4 erandes / that Cete / 5 When / 6 of the fest / grete solenlyte / 7 That purpose noo thing / 8 that Abner shuld / neightbure / 9 He hopped / shuld / ner / 11 That / wolle / mar / 12 that.

632 ffyrst he told vnto the kyng,
 »pat Abanare dose [is] all enuy.
 7575 he feynys frenschepe for no thyng
 bot for he wyll þis land aspye
 how he may best hys ost In bryng
 so to persew þe præuely.
 7580 And þou wyll trest to his tellyng,
 þis land may so be lost þerby.»
 þe kyng wyst þis was wrang;
 þe case full well he knew.
 And sayd, »wher euer he gang,
 I trow Abnare be trew.»

Joab told the king that Abner was only pretending to be his friend because he wanted to get an opportunity of bringing in his army. If the king trusted him, he might lose his land. But David did not believe Joab.

7585 633 When Ioab wyst þis wold not be,
 sone hath he soyzt A sotell gyne.
 ffayr letturs sent he forto se
 with þe best knyghtes of all his kyn
 And prayd Abnare þat hast suld he
 7590 to þe kyng be lyue, for no thyng [bl]yn,
 And speke with hym in specialte
 for bourdes þat þei suld be gyn.
 Abnare full sone assent
 to werke þe kynges wyll.
 7595 Wyghtly with þem he went,
 þat wold sped hym to spyll.

Then Joab invented a subtle ruse. He sent his best knights with letters to Abner, asking him to hurry to the king. Abner assented at once.

634 þen Ioab con full grathly spye
 and wentt to feld hym forto kepe.
 7600 he and his broþer abyʒai
 welcumd hym with grett wrschepe.
 In consell þei cald hym in hy,
 ryzt als þei for his wo wold wepe.
 Ioab þen spake full specialli
 and þer with wroyzt hym wowndes depe.
 7605 þis was a[n] [evyll] corde
 and wroyzt with weked trayn.
 Alas þat swylke a lord
 falsly suld be slayn!

Joab and his brother Abishai welcomed Abner with great honour. A council was held, where Abner was killed by Joab. Alas that such a lord should so falsely be slain!

S 632. 2 dose all his / — 633. 4 bestes / 6 wyn / 9 sone he / — 634. 9 a gentyll / 11 alord.

L 632. 1 First / vnto omitted / 2 that Abner doos is all envy / 3 He feynes frenship / noo thing / 4 wolle this / aspy / 5 How / he omitted / his oste in / 6 ouercome the prively / 7 wolle trust vnto / sayng / 8 this / so omitted / therby / 9 The king knew this / 10 the cause / wele / wyst / 11 where / 12 Abner — 633. 1 wist this / 2 has / soght a sutell / 3 ffaire lettures / 4 þe omitted / best knyghtes / 5 Abner that / shuld / 6 the king belyvè / noo thing blyn / 8 maters that they shuld begyne / 9 Abner / he omitted / 10 wirke the kinges / 11 Whightly / them / 12 that / spede him / — 634. fol. 152 b / 1 Then / couth / graythly espy / 2 went / felde him / 3 He / brothre Abysay / 4 welcomed / gret worship / 5 counsel cald they / 6 right as they / woo / 7 then / specially / 8 therwith wrought / woundes / 9 This / an evyll acorde / 10 wrought / wyked trayne / 11 Allas that suche / lorde / 12 so falsly shuld / slayne.

David was deeply aggrieved. But Joab had an elaborate tale ready, saying that he had been quite justified in avenging his brother's death. But his real motive for killing Abner was of course that he feared to lose his power.

The king did his duty to the duke by burying him in the city. But let us now tell what became of Ish-bosheth, the king of Israel.

To him was done as much wrong as earlier to Abner, by two traitors of Benjamin's tribe, Rechab and Baanah, as the Book bears witness.

- 635 So preuely his sword he drogh;
 þe Duke was dede þore sodanly. 7610
 kyng Dauid hath full mekyll woght
 when he herd tell þis trechery.
 Duke Ioab made hīs tale full togh
 and sayd he had encheson why:
 »My broþer Ayȝel he slogh,
 and þen I myȝt no wyn hym by.» 7615
 Bot als men may suppose,
 he dyd yt more for drede
 þe lordschep forto lose
 þat he had forto lede. 7620
- 636 The kyng is so with mornynge mett;
 hym gaynes nowder game ne glee.
 Vnto þe Duke he dyd hīs dett: fol. 72 a
 Interyd hym in þat same cyte. 7625
 þen of þis lesson wyll we let
 sen of þis bale no bott may be,
 And say how fell of ysbosett,
 te kyng of israhel cuntre.
 when he herd how men sayd
 þat Duke Abnare was dede 7630
 And traytury be trayd,
 he was full wyll of rede.
- 637 ffull grett mornynge he mad amang;
 so dyd all þat þen wore þore.
 bot hīs lyfe lasted not aftur lang; 7635
 swylke falshed was formeld þ[er]fore.
 To hym was wroyȝt als mekyll wrang
 as to Abnare or ellys more,
 be two tyrandes and trayturs strang;
 of byniamyns both born þei wore, 7640
 Rocab and baana,
 as beyrs wytteneþe þe boke.
 þies ware þe trayturs two
 þat treson vnder toke.

S 635. 8 by 'be', cf. G. Forsström, *The Verb 'To Be' in Middle English*, Lund, 1948, p. 156 ff. | — 636. 3 In upper margin liber Regum ihus | 8 te cuntre.

L 635. 1 prively | swerd | 2 the | deid there | 3 King | had | mych wogh | 4 this trichory | 5 tayle | 6 I had | 7 brothre Asaell | 8 then | myght not | 9 as | 10 did it | 11 The lordship | 12 that | — 636. 1 king | mournynge | 2 glades navthre gam | 3 the | did | 4 entered | that | Citee | 5 Then | this | wolle | lett | 6 sith | his | noo boyte | 7 how it befell | hisbosett | 8 the king | Israell cuntre | 9 When | hard | 10 the | Abner | deid | 11 traturesly betrayd | 12 Wyll | reid | — 637. 1 Full gret mournynge | 2 did all tho that then were there | 3 Bot | life lastes | after | 4 suche falsed | formeled therfore | 5 wrought as much | 6 Abner | elles | 7 Be twoo tirauntȝ | traitures | 8 Beniamins | were they borne | 9 Recab | Beana | 10 beyrs wittnes the booke | 11 Thes were the traitures twoo | 12 that | vndretoke.

- 7645 638 ffor none may bettur a man betray
 þen he in whom his hert [is trist].
 so preuey with þe kyng war þei
 to com [in] and owt at þer lyst.
 Als he lay slepand on a day
 7650 in place where non bot þei yt wüst,
 his hed þei toke and bare a way
 full mony myls or þei ware myst.
 þei wend full well haue done
 qwen [þei] þis falshed fand.
 7655 To kyng Dauid full sone
 þei offerd þat presand.

They were so intimate with the king that they could come and go there at pleasure. As he lay sleeping, they cut off his head and offered it to David as a present.

- 639 with full grett gladnese þei hym grett
 and sone rehersed hym þer resown:
 »ser, here þe hede of kyng ysbosett
 7660 þat was þi foo in feld and town.
 Now lyfes þe[re] non [þe] forto lett.»
 he sayd, »trayturs, full of tresown,
 haue ʒe no mynd how I hym mett
 þat proferd me kynges saul crown?
 7665 his hed I gart of schauē,
 for he dyd þat dyspyte.
 þe same hyre sall ʒe haue.»
 þer hedes he gart of smytt.

But David called them traitors and reminded them how he had treated the man who offered him King Saul's crown. He would give them the same wages, he said, and smote off their heads.

- 640 Vnto kyng Dauid þan þei draw,
 7670 lordes of ylka cuntre cleyne.
 And for þer kyng all þei hym kn[a]w
 and makes hym homage all be dene.
 so was he lord of hegh and law
 þat langed to þe XII kynredes kene.
 7675 fol. 72 b þen loues he god, als he well aw,
 þat so hath sett hym to be sene.
 And full grett sacrafyce
 to god þore con he make,
 And ylke man on þer wyse
 7680 dyde þe same for his sake.

David was now acknowledged as lord of high and low of the twelve tribes. Then he praised God who had so exalted him, and made great sacrifice. The people did the same.

S 638. 2 has / 3 preuely altered to preuey / 4 two to com / 10 letter cancelled before qwen / — 639. 3 þe kyng / — 640. 2 lo lordes / 3 knew.

L 638. 1 For noone / better / 2 than / whome / is trist / 3 So preuey / the / were they / 4 come in and oute att their list / 5 As / 6 where noone / they it / 7 His heved they tuke / 8 many myles / they were / 9 They wened / wele have doone / 10 When they this falsed / 12 they profered their / — 639. 1 With / grete gladnes they him gret / 2 rehersed / their reason / 3 Ser / is heved / king hisboset / 4 that / thy foo / felde / towne / 5 lifes there noone the / 6 traytures / treason / 7 Have ye noo mynde / 8 that profered / kyng Saul crowne / 9 His heved / made / shave / 10 did that dispite / 11 The / here shal ye have / 12 their hevedes / smyte / — 640. 1 Unto king / then they / 2 the lordes / ych a / clene / 3 their king / they / know / 4 to hym / 5 So / lorde / high / lowe / 6 that / the twelwe / 7 Then loves / as hym wele owe / 8 that / has set / 9 Worthy sacrifice / 10 there gun / 11 ych / their / 12 did the / their.

When his enemies were dead, the king wanted to know how many men there were of each tribe that were able to bear arms. Of the tribe of Judah there were six thousand and fourscore.

- 641 Sen þat his enmys þen ware ded
 þat lyfand wold haue done hym dere,
 And all ware sembled in þat same stede,
 þe kyng wyll wytt what folke þe are.
 he gart cownt of ylk kynred 7685
 all þat ware abyll armys to bere,
 And þat hade force to fend þar hede
and fals phylysteyns forto fere.
 The kynred of Iuda:
 VI thowsand *and* IIII score, 7690
 þis was nowmer of þa
 þat ware ay sett be fore.

Of the tribe of Levi, there were four thousand seven hundred; of Benjamin four thousand; of Ephraim twenty thousand eight hundred; of Issachar twenty thousand two hundred; of Simeon seven thousand one hundred; of Zebulun fifty thousand.

- 642 Of þe lyne of leuy, lygh als leuyn,
 IIII thowsand VII hunderth told.
 Of beniamyn IIII thowsand euyn, 7695
and þen of effraym elders old
 were XX thowsand styrd be steuyn,
and VIII hunderth of berns bold.
 Of ysacar II C to neuyn
and XX thowsand, wytt who wold. 7700
 VII thowsand of symeon
and I hunderth at hand.
 And sythyn of ʒabulon
 ware L thowsand.

Of Naphtali there were so many that nobody could number them. Of Asher forty thousand; of Dan twenty-seven thousand; of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh six hundred thousand altogether. Old and young paid homage to David, who had been made king thrice.

- 643 Of neptalim was so grett plente, 7705
 to nowmer þem myʒt no man co[m].
 Of Aser XL thowsand free,
 of Dan XX *and* VII thowsand sum.
 Of ruben, gad, *and* manasse,
 þat ware wunnand be ʒond the flum, 7710
 Sex C thowsand had þo thre.
 of all þer was a thryfty thrum.
 And þer ald *and* ʒeyng
with wrschyp on þer wyse
 Raysed dauid to be kyng. 7715
 þen was he ordand thryse.

S 643. 1 neptalim / 2 con *over* neuyn cancelled.

L 641. 1 Sith that / then were deid / 2 that lifand / have doon / 3 were sem-
 bland / that / steid / 4 the Wold wit / there were / 5 He / acount / ych / 6 that
 were / armes / 7 And at theirre force / theirre / 8 Philistiens / 9 fol. 153 a / Regum
 Secundo *in top margin* / The kynred of Iuda / 10 they were sett before / 11 They
 were noumered to say / 12 sex thowsand and four score — 642. 1 the / levy
 was there fonne / 2 foure thowsand and seven hundreth tolde / 3 Beniamyn foure
 thowsand evyn / 4 then / farrom eldirs olde / 5 Were twenty thowsand stired by
 stevyn / 6 eght hundereth / barnes bolde / 7 ysachare twoo hundreth / nevyn /
 8 twenty thowsand know / wolde / 9 Seven thowsand / Symeon / 10 a hunderith /
 11 sith / ʒabulon / 12 were full fifty thowsand — 643. 1 Neptalym / grete / 2
 noumber theym myght noo / cum / 3 fourty thowsand fre / 4 seven and twenty
 thowsand trwly / 5 Ruben Gad / Manasse / 6 that were wonnand beyond / flume /
 7 hundreth thowsand / thoo / 8 of all þer omitted / this was a goodly company / 9
 And all they old and ying / 10 worship / theirre / 11 Raised Dauid / king / 12 then.

- 644 The fyrst tym [was] be twyx þem two,
 þe prophett samuel *and* he,
 when god bad hym to bedlem go,
 77²⁰ *and* Daudid kepted his fader fee.
 þe secund was in cecilla
 whore he wounned *with* his wyfes three.
 þore come þe kynred of Iuda
and made hym kyng of þat cuntre.
 77²⁵ The thryd was now hym selfe
 In Ebron was made kyng
 Of all the kynredes twelwe
 þat lyfyd to goddes lykyng,
- fol. 73 a 645 qwylike comynly ware cald cananews
 773⁰ for canan þat þe dwelled In.
 And for Abraham þei ware Ebrews
 namyd *with* men, both more *and* myn.
 In ierusalem þen wounned ʒebesews,
 þe fellest folke of phylysteyn.
 7735 And for þei ware so mekyll sch[re]ws,
 on þem to were he wyll be gyn.
 þe men þat þus ware mett
and geydderd in grett rowte
 To þat Cyte ware sett
 774⁰ *and* segyd yt all abowte.
- 646 þe folke *with* In, of felows fame,
 saw þei had no force to fyʒt.
 þei toyʒt to gare þem schon for schame;
 þis sotelty sone haue þei dyʒt:
 7745 All þe lepurs *and* all þe lame
and all þe blynd þat wantyd syʒt
 A pon þe walles þei sett þo same
and bad þem crye holy on hyght,
 »Daudid, þat kyng is cald,
 775⁰ for all þi brag *and* bost,
 þis Cety sall we hald
 fro þe and all þin ost.»

The first time was when God bade him go to Bethleem; the second, when the tribe of Judah made him their king; the third, when he became king of all the twelve tribes.

After their country they were called Canaanites, otherwise Hebrews. In Jerusalem there lived the Jebusites, wicked men on whom the king wanted to wage war. He laid siege to that city.

The people within tried a stratagem to make David raise the siege. All the lepers, the lame and the blind were set on the walls to challenge the king.

S 645. 7 scherws *metathesis?*

L 644. 1 first tyme was betwix theym twoo / 2 the prophet Samuel / 3 When / god above the line / Bethleem goo / 4 fadres / 5 The / Sicelech / 6 where / thre / 7 There / the kinred / 8 their cuntre / 9 third tyme was / 10 king / 11 kinred / 12 that lifed / likyng / — **645.** 1 Which comonly were called Cananews / 2 Canaan that they Wounned in / 3 they were / 4 named by / 5 Ierusalem there / Tebesews / 6 the / Philistien / 7 they were / evyll shrews / 8 theym / werre Daudid did begyn / 9 His men when they were met / 10 gedered / grete rowte / 11 that Citee were sett / 12 seged it / abowte / — **646.** 1 The / within / fellones / 2 they hade noo / forto fyght / 3 They sought / make theym shonne / shame / 4 this sotelte / have they dyght / 5 the leperous / the / 6 the blynde that wanted sight / 7 Vpon the / they set thoo / 8 theym cry holly / hight / 9 that king was / 10 thy / boste / 11 This Citee wolle / 12 for the / thyn oste.

But David took the town very quickly and smote off the heads of both man and page. The chiefs of the Jebusites had taken a tower as their stronghold.

647 The kyng hard how the crepyls cryde
and wyst yt was done in dyspytt.
 perfor he wold no langer byde 7755
 bot qwykly fand yt forto qwytt.
 pei seged yt full sadly on ylka syde
 so pat pat cyte toke pei full tytte.
 both man *and* page for all per prid
 per heddes full smartly pei of smytte. 7760
 The kyng þus and his ost
 dystroyd both bred *and* lengh.
 þo pat wore maysturs most
 had takyn a towr for strengh.

David began to attack the tower and said that he who first entered it should be made chief of the king's council. Joab wanted to attain that distinction himself.

648 when pei had þus pat Cety wun 7765
and broyzt yt all vnder per bale,
 Vnto þe towre pei haue be gun
 to sett *and* sadly yt asale.
 kyng Daudid sayd what moder sun
 þat enturs fyrst *withoutyn* fale, 7770
 Als most frendly he sal be fun
and most cheue of þe kynges consale.
 When Duke Ioab con here
 þe kyng gaf þis decre,
 he wold non were so nere 7775
 of his consell os he.

He did not shun any peril or pain until he had entered the tower. Then he was made chief of all the king's men.

649 perfor he dyd his myzt *and* mayn
 þat wrschep to hym self at wyn.
 he cast no perels ne no payn 7780
 tyll he þat towr was enturd In.
 And hastely he hath þem slayn;
 þat boldnes gart his gamys be gyn.
 ffor so he was sett a[s] souerayn
 of all þe kynges men, more *and* myn,
 And most chefe of conselys, 7785
 whore so þei gang or ryde,
 And ordenare of batellys
 to buske or ellys to abyde.

S 648. 4 *This line written above* pat enturs fyrst *withoutyn* fale, cancelled; cf. line 6 / 5 Als most frendly he suld be fun cancelled before kyng; cf. line 7 / 10 degre cancelled before decre / — **649.** 7 all.

L 647. 1 king herd / crepylls cried / 2 wist it was doone / dispite / 3 Therefore / noo lenger abyde / 4 wyghtly hasted it / qvyte / 5 They / yt omitted / ych asyde / 6 that the Citee tuke they tyte / 7 Both / their pryde / 8 their hevedes / smertly of they smyte / 9 thus / oste / 10 dystroyd / brede / lenght / 11 They that were maisters moste / 12 taken / toure / strenght / — **648.** 1 When they / thus this Citee wonne / 2 broght it / vndre their / 3 that toure they have begonne / 4 to sege / it assale / 5 King / that modre sonne / 6 that entred first withoute fayle / 7 As / frendely / shuld / fonne / 8 chief / the kinges counsayle / 9 gun / 10 the king gyve his degre / 11 He wald noon / 12 counsayle as he / — **649.** 1 Therefore / did / myght / mayne / 2 that worship / him self to wyne / 3 kast noo perells / noo payne / 4 to he that toure / entred in / 5 fol. 153 b / has theym slayne / 6 that / made / gam begyn / 7 set as souerayne / 8 the kinges meny / 9 chief / counsayles / 10 where / they / 11 ordynar / batayles / 12 to passe furth or byd abyde.

- 7790 650 Sen þat place was þer best socour,
to byd þore ware þei not to blame.
þe folke þen namyd yt Dauid towre,
and to þis day yt beyrs þat name.
so was the kyng sett in honour
and ouer all namyd of nobyll fame.
- 7795 Phylesteyns þat war styfe in stowre,
in þis tyme þei war mad full tame
And flemed fro þat Cyte,
and Ebrews þor ordand.
þe kyng bad yt suld be
- 7800 chefe Cyte of þat land.

The tower was named David's tower and it bears that name to this day. The Philistines were driven away from the city, which was now to be the chief city of the land.

- 651 þos lordes þen þer leuys hath tane
when he was sett as soueran syre.
ffor hym to noye þen was þer none
bot fals phylsteyns, fell ose fyre.
- 7805 Amang all oþer was þer on,
Aram, þat was kyng of tyre;
Of sy[d]er wod had he gud wone.
and þat was kyng Dauid desyre
forto make howse in hast
- 7810 his Ebrews in to abyd,
ffor þat Cyte was wast
sere tymes be for þat tyde.

David had no enemies now but the false Philistines. King Hiram of Tyre had plenty of cedar-wood. David wanted such wood for his building plans.

- 652 when Aram, kyng of tyre, herd tell
kyng Dauid in so grett degre,
- 7815 And þat he dyȝt hym forto dwell
in ierusalem, þat grett Cete,
grett syder treyse fast gart he fell,
and bad þat wryghtes bown suld be
- And þe best masons þe[m] omel
at wend to canan cuntre.
- 7820 »Sekys to þe kyng», he sayd,
»and werkes what he wyll bede.»
kyng Dauid was well payd,
for of swylke had he nede.

When Hiram heard that David was going to make Jerusalem his capital, he caused great cedar-trees to be felled and sent builders and masons to Canaan. David was very pleased.

S 651. 6 Iram altered to Aram / 7 syper / syder wyn cancelled above syper wod / 10 into / — **652.** 5 gart cancelled before gart / 7 þen.

L 650. 1 Sith that / their / socoure / 2 abyde there / they / 3 The / then named it / toure / 4 this / it beres that / 5 So / king set / honour / 6 named / noble / 7 Philistiens that were stif / stoure / 8 this / were they made / 9 that Cite / 10 and the / there / 11 The comaunded it shuld / 12 the chiefe Citee / that / — **651.** The / then their leue has taken / 2 set / souerayn / 3 then / there noone / 4 Philistiens fals as / 5 othre / there oone / 6 Iram that / king / 7 Cedre / goode woone / 8 that / kinges / 9 fforto / houses / haste / 10 into abyde / 11 the Citee / waste / 12 dyuers tymes before that / — **652.** 1 When Iram / Tyre / 2 king / grete / 3 that / dight / 4 In Ierusalem that grete Cite / 5 Grete Cedre tres / did / 6 that wryghtes bowne shuld / 7 the / mason them omell / 8 to wende / Canaan / 9 Sekes / the king / 10 wirkes / wolle byd / 11 King / wele / 12 such.

He fortified the city
and made fine halls for
the lords and ladies.
One of his many wives
bore Absalom and his
sister Tamar.

- 653 þen made he walles full mekyll of myȝt 7825
with nobyll towrs and turrets by
And barrys b[u]ne with yrn [and] dyȝt
forto eschew all yll enmy.
þen mad he halles *and* [howses] on heyȝt
for lordes *and* lades in to ly 7830
with selers semly vnto syȝt
pauyd *and* paynted with ymagry.
Of wyfes he had gud wone, fol. 74 a
þat with hym wonnand ware.
[A wyfe bare Absolon 7835
and his suster Thamar.]

But the Philistines
were none too pleased
that David should be
sovereign king. They
besieged Jerusalem but
had to give it up for
the time being.

- 654 Now hath kyng Dauid power playn
of Ebrews in ylk cuntree.
Bot phylysteysn ware no thyng fayn
þat he suld gouera[n]d swylke degre. 7840
þei sembled men with all þer mayn
to sege ierusalem Cyte.
bot os god wold, sone was sum slayn,
and sum also ware fayn to flee.
þat toyȝt þem grett dyspyte; 7845
þerfor þei wold not blyne.
þei gatt mo folke full tytt
and new were con be gyne.

When the Philistines
again tried to take the
city, God assured David
of victory and told him
to lay his men in am-
bush by the forest side.

- 655 þei geydderd full grett cumpany
þat Cyte oft sythys to assayle. 7850
kyng Dauid wold not feygh for þi
or he of god had sum consayle
wheþer he suld haue þe vycory
and bettur byd in þat batell.
God warnd hym þen full wyttly 7855
by a sygne þat he suld not fayle.
God bad he suld take tent
and on þe euynyng tyd
lay hys men in buschement
vnder A forest syde. 7860

S 653. 3 bene / 5 halles / 6 into / 11—12 omitted / — 654. 4 gouerard cf. 171: 7 / 5 þem altered to þei.

L 653. 1 Then / mych / myght / 2 noble toures / turretȝ / 3 barres bonne / iren and dyght / 4 eshve / evyll envy / 5 Then made / 'and' halles omitted / hight / 6 ladies in to / 7 With sellers semely / sight / 8 paved / ymagery / 9 wyves / goode woone / 10 that / him / were / 11—12 = text above / — 654. 1 has king / powerre playne / 2 euery cuntre / 3 Philistiens were / thing fayne / 4 that / shuld governe such degre / 5 They / their mayne / 6 Ierusalem Cite / 7 Bot as / some were they slayne / 8 and sum for ferd were fayne / fle / 9 That thought theym grete dispite / 10 therfore they / blyn / 11 They gate moo / tyte / 12 werre gun begyn / — 655. 1 They gedred / grete company / 2 that Cite eft sons / 3 Kyng / fyght forthy / 4 counsayle / 5 Whethre / shuld have victory / 6 better to abyde / that batale / 7 warned / þen omitted / witterly / 8 be / signe that / shuld / 9 shuld / 10 the evyn tyde / 11 Lay / bushment / 12 vndre a.

- 656 »On þe morn þen sall ȝe fynd
 þis tokyn trew þat I yow tell.
 when þe wod wages *with* outyn wynd,
 wend þou þen be lyue; no langer dwell.
 7865 your enmys sall ȝe bette *and* bynd
and make þem flee ouer fyrth *and* fell.
 þei sal be lorn þat leuys be hynd,
and maystry leue þi men omell.»
 Os god demed, Dauid dyde.
 7870 his men sone he arayde.
 And all to hym be tyd,
 als god hym self had sayd.

In the morning when the wood stirred without wind, David was to attack and defeat his enemies. He did so, and everything turned out as God Himself had said.

- 657 when þei to batell bremlly breyst,
 Phylysteyns ware full fayn to flee.
 7875 þe kyng *with* his folke foled fast
and putt þem down, full grett plente.
 with þer pursewyt so ar þei past
 to gessore, þat was þer Cyte.
 7880 þat þei conquerd *and* down yt cast
and gat gret gud of gold *and* fee.
 þei wan þor welth enogh,
 þat wold to tresour tent.
 hamward þen þei drogh
and stroyd euer as þei wentt.

The Philistines fled and the king pursued them. He captured and destroyed Gazer, the Philistine city. Great spoil was taken before he returned home.

- 7885 658 The godes of gold þat þei gat þore,
 þat ware made for þer mawmentry,
 fol. 74 b kyng Dauid toke þem to tresour
and forto menske god allmighty.
 So fals phylysteyns wasted wore
 7890 þat þei myȝt make no more maystry.
 kyng Dauid wex ay more *and* more
 with wrschep, als he was worthy.
 god wroyȝt for hym all way
and made hym mekyll in price.
 7895 And he honerd god ay
 with suyt *and* sacrafyce.

The Philistines' idols of gold were turned into treasures to honour Almighty God. After the thorough defeat of the Philistines, David's glory grew more and more, and God was with him.

S 656. 7 salbe / — **658.** 5 ed in wasted above the line.

L 656. 1 And on the morne then shal thou / 2 this talkyng / that / the / 3 When the / waggys withouten / 4 wende then belyve noo lenger / 5 Yourre / shal ye bete / 6 theym fle / firth / 7 They shal belorne that leyves behynd / 8 maistry / thy / 9 As / did / 10 arrayd / 11 all omitted / betyd / 12 as / — **657.** Leaves 154—155 lost, comprising 657—687: 8.

He made up his mind to move the ark from Gibeah to Jerusalem with great solemnity. The ark was escorted by 30,000 men, and there was all manner of minstrelsy.

- 659 þen toke he purpase for to ta
 in to ierusalem Cyte
 þe arke of gold fra Gabatha
and sett yt vp in grett degre. 7900
 XXX milia gart he ga
with sang and grett solempnite
with outyn prestes and dekyns ma
 þat a bowt yt agh to be.
 All maner of mynstralsy 7905
 was ordand for þis thyng,
 And full fayre cumpany
 went be fore *with* þe kyng.

When they went down a hill, one Uzzah tried to support the ark with his hand and met with sudden death. That should teach us a lesson: profane men should not touch sacred things.

- 660 All loued þei god both loud *and* styll
 þat his arke suld lend in þer land. 7910
 þe arke, als þei went down a hyll,
 for als yt suld be falland.
 On Osay went *with* full gud wyll
 to hald yt vp layd on his hand.
 Sone sodan ded was sent hym tyll, 7915
 for he þerfor was not ordand.
 þis lesson wyll vs lere:
 non suld neght howled thyng,
 bot þei þat haue power
 grauntyd of goddes gyfng. 7920

When the ark had been brought to Jerusalem, a beautiful tabernacle was made for it. There was much sacrificing and everybody was glad as if God Himself had been among them.

- 661 To ierusalem þat arke is broyzt
with prelettes and with prophettes of price.
 A tabernakyll þer to was wroyzt,
 als well os werkemen cowd a vyse.
 On ylka syde þerto þei soyzt 7925
with sense and solempne sacrafyce.
 Als þei had god hym self þei toyzt;
 so fayn was ylkon on þer wyse.
 Kyng Daud was full glad
 þat hym was sent swylke seyle; 7930
 Gud hope in hert he hade
 þat god dyd euer ylk dele.

659. 1 vp cancelled after he.

662 And be cause he swylke wrschep wan
and gat to gouern swylke degre,
 7935 To honer god, yf þat he can,
 in all his myȝt ymagyns hee.
 he told to þe prophett nathan
 þat he wold make of ston *and* tree
 A chyrch þat was cald tempyls þen
 7940 whore in þe arke of god myȝt be,
 fol. 75 a þat folke may call *and* knell
 to be assoiled of þer syn.
 þo prophett prayssed hym well
 swylke gud werke to be gyn.

David conceived the idea of making a temple in which the ark of God might be kept. He told Nathan the prophet about his plan and the prophet approved of it.

7945 663 bot aftur, o[s] I vnderst[ode],
 god cald vnto hym on A nyȝt,
 »Dauid, my seruand myld of mode,
 A howse to me sall þou non dyȝt,
 7950 By cause þi handes ar full of blod
 of þos þat þou hath feld in fyȝt.
 I thanke þe þat þi wyll is gud,
and þerfor sall þou reyng be ryȝt.
 And aftur þe þin hayre,
 þat sal be salamon,
 7955 he sall make well *and* fayre
 my howse of tree and ston.»

But God declined David's offer because his hands were covered with blood. God thanked him for his good will, but Solomon, his son and heir, was to build the Lord's temple instead of David.

664 The prophett sayd þe kyng certayn,
 als god had told hym vnder teld.
 7960 þen was kyng Dauid ferly fayn
 þat his heyre suld his welthis weld.
 he honerd god with all his mayn
 þat hym had broyȝt vnto swylke beld
 And mad hym kyng with power playn
 fro hyrd þat keped fee in feld.
 7965 he gouerned al[d] and ȝyng
 all way by consell clere;
 so lyfyd he in lykyng
 in myrth full mony a ȝere.

King David was glad that his son was to inherit his wealth, and honoured the Lord, who had made him, a simple shepherd, sovereign king. He lived in great happiness many years.

662. 11 For þo see *Kalén p. CXXI* | — 663. 1 MS. vnderstand | 8 letter cancelled after 'and' | 10 MS. salbe | — 664. 9 MS. all; cf., however, *Kalén, p. CXXXIII: 2* | 12 in above 'and' cancelled.

David did not forget those who had helped him when he was in distress. He had a special feeling for the seed of Jonathan. A son of his was called Mephibosheth.

- 665 Kyng Dauid both be nyght *and* days
 full dewly demys of ylka dede. 7970
 ffor on poynt was he worthy to prayse:
 þat he wold herkyn *and* take hede
 In ryȝt *and* reuerence þem to arase
 þat helped hym when he had nede. 7975
 ffor Ionatas waytt he all ways
 yf any sewtt ware of his sede,
 ffor whyls he lyfed in land,
 his luf myȝt no thyng lett.
 A sun of his þei fand
 þat heygh Mifibosett. 7980

He was lame. David made him a peer and provided for him. Ziba was appointed his chief steward. It was all for the sake of his father, gentle Jonathan.

- 666 This mifeboȝett was of age,
 bot mayned *and* halt was he.
 kyng Dauid putt hym into perage
 of bachelor, [os] aght to be. 7985
 In ierusalem a certayn stage
 was made for hym *and* his meneȝe.
 he held wyght men for þer wage
 to serue hym in sere degre.
 his steward con he make
 Cyba, þat souerin was; 7990
 All for his fader sake,
 gentyll Ionatas.

When Nahash, king of the Ammonites, died, he was succeeded by his sun Hanun, who was later found to be a fool. David loved him as dearly as his own son and sent wise men to guide and advise the child.

- 667 when þis was done sone aftur þis
 [A] Duke, þat Dauid trysted a pon,
 heyȝt Naas, kyng of amonys, 7995
 and had an heyre, þat heyȝt Anon.
 þe fader was wytty *and* wyse, fol. 75 b
 bot sythyn þe sun was fon a fown.
 kyng Dauid held hym mekyll of price
 euyñ as his awn son absolon. 8000
 Sone when he herd of þis
 þat kyng Naas was dede,
 he sent wysmen of his
 the chyld to wysch *and* rede.

8005 668 he bad þem tell hym how he wold
 mayntein hym *with all his myȝt*
 And þe same frendchep *with hym hold*
 þat he had to his fader hyȝt.
 þe messyngers, herdy *and bold,*
 8010 to wend þis way þei war full wyȝt.
 And to þe ȝyng kyng haue þei told
 þer resons all; þei rehershed ryȝt
 how kyng Daudid had sayd
 his frenschepe suld not faylle.
 8015 þe princes ware not payd
and cald þe kyng in consayle.

The messengers told Hanun that David wanted to keep up the same friendship with him as with his father. But the princes were displeased and called King Hanun into council.

669 þei say, »ser, be ware *and* wytty;
 þis is the falsched of þi foo.
 8020 þies lordans comys þi land to spy
and wayte how þei may werke þe wo.
 þerfor ser, sett no thyng þer by,
 bot sen þou sees þat yt is so,
 lett vs waytt þem sum velany
and send þem furth wher þei com fro.»
 8025 þe kyng was ȝyng of eld,
 þat was sone aftur sene.
 he lost his bygest beld,
and so yt turned to tene.

They told him that David's men had come as spies. Therefore they should be punished and sent back to their country. The young king lost his best comfort and came to grief.

670 be þis consell þe kynges meneȝe
 8030 þis messyngers both bett *and* band
 And cutt þer cloghes vp at the the,
 als foles wer serue[d] in þat land;
 Sythyn mad þer berdes half chauyn be
and þe oþer half styll to stand
 8035 And send þem so to þer cuntre
and bad þei suld go tell thythand.
 yf kyng David for þis
 be wroth, no wonnder yt ys,
 To see so mekyll of mys
 8040 agayns his grett gudnes.

David's men were ill-treated: their clothes cut off at the thigh, one half of their beards shaved off. No wonder David was angry.

668. 3 d in frendchep inserted above the line | — 670. 4 sertes cancelled after wer.

David bade his men
avenge this villainy. Joab
and his brother Abishai
assembled people from
all sides to conquer
Hanun, the king of Am-
mon, who put his people
in array against them.

671 he bad þem venge þis velany
þat vnder hym had his power.
Ioab, his steward stalworthy,
sayd yt suld be boyȝt full dere.
And his broþer abbysay 8045
sembled folk from sydes sere
Anon, þe kyng of amonys,
and his cuntre forto conquere.
when kyng anon herd say
of Ioab entent þat tyd, 8050
his folke he gart aray
in batell hym to abyd. fol. 76 a

Joab broke into Am-
mon destroying and
burning everything. As
soon as they offered
battle, the Philistines
fled into Rabbah, which
was a strongly fortified
city.

672 Duke Ioab furth his folke he led
vnto þei come in amonys cuntre.
he stroyd and brent all þat was bred 8055
and nawder spared folke ne fee.
And als sone os þei batell bed
to loke who suld þe bettur bee,
Phylysteyns full fast þei fled
and toke [to] Rabatt, þare ryche Cyte. 8060
þat Cyte was so strong
with guns and oþer geyre.
ffro þei þat force myȝt fang,
þei dowtt no dedes of were.

Joab prepared to be-
sieve that city. At this
time David committed
gross adultery with Bath-
sheba, the wife of Uriah,
who was fighting at
Rabbah.

673 Duke Ioab dyȝt hym forto dwell 8065
and wyn þat Cyte, yf he myȝt.
And in þis meyn tyme þat I tell,
kyn[g] Dauid rewled hym all vnryȝt.
In awowtry fowle he fell
with vry wyf, þat [was] his knyȝt. 8070
Swylke medyturs was mad o mell
þat with hym was scho all nyȝt.
Dame barsabe scho hatt,
þat was tane vnder teld.
ser vrre at Rabat 8075
lay fort[o] fyȝt in feld.

671. 7 MS. A non / — 673. 4 MS. kynd / 5 MS. a wowtry / 12 vn cancelled
before in.

- 674 Sone on þe morn Dame barsabe
 supposed to be *with* chyld in hy.
 And costom was in þat cuntre:
 8080 who so was tan in avowtry
 Suld be stoned in þe same Cyte.
 þerfor scho past full *preuely*
 And prayd þe kyng hertly þat he
 suld ordan þerfor remedy.
 8085 þe kyng sayd, »dred þe noyzt.
 þor sall no folke þe fyle.»
 Sone þen he hym be toyzt
 of a full wekyd wyle.
- 675 he thynkes in his awn entent
 8090 how he suld fell all fowle defame.
 Aftur *ser* vrre hath he sent
 and bad þat he suld hast hym hame.
 And in þis message hath he ment
 so forto scheld þe wyfe fro schame.
 8095 ffro he *with* hyr alon ware lent,
 of þat barne suld he bere þe blame.
 Syr vrre hast hym sone
 and com þe kyng vntyll.
 he wyst not what was [done]
 8100 and askyd what was his wyll.
- 676 þe kyng says, »full fayn wold I fele
 how frendes faryn sen þei ferd vs fro,
 And for þin awn sake, *ser*, sum dele
 þat þou may rest a day or two.
 8105 fol. 76 b þi wyfe thynkes lang, I wott full well;
 þerfor to hyr I red þou go
 And make hyr solace for *your* sele.
 yt is semly þat þou do so.»
 Syr vrry sayd not nay,
 8110 bot furth he wendys his ways.
 And all þat nyzt he lay
 within the kynges palys.

Soon Bath-sheba was with child. She feared she would be stoned, as was the custom in that country, and asked the king to find an expedient. He hit upon a wicked device.

Uriah was sent for in order that the woman should be shielded from shame. He came to the king and asked what he wanted.

The king wanted to hear news about his friends and said that Uriah deserved a rest for a day or two. He ought to go and comfort his wife. But Uriah went away and spent the night in the king's palace.

674. 1 on *above* at cancelled | 8 ordand *with the second d* cancelled | — 675. 10 MS. com to.

In the morning the king asked Uriah why he had not been with his wife. The knight answered that he would not enjoy any comfort while all his fellows were risking their lives on the battlefield. The king, realizing that his plan was a failure, wrote a letter ordering Uriah's death.

677 sone on þe morn þe kyng be held
 he was not gone *his* wyfe to glose,
 And askyd *hym* why he wold not ȝeld 8115
 chere to *his* wyfe sen he had chose.
 þe knyȝt sayd he suld byde no beld,
 ne be vncled of cotte ne hose,
 whyls all *his* felows lay in feld
 to wyn wrschep or lyfes lose. 8120
 þe kyng saw *his* for toyȝt
 myȝt no thyng stand in stede.
 A lettur be lyue he wroyȝt,
 qwylke sayd he suld be dede.

The king asked Uriah to deliver the letter to Joab, and Uriah did so, suspecting nothing. Joab understood what was to be done.

678 þat lettur he toke þe knyȝt vntyll 8125
 And sayd, »*ser*, sen þou wyll not [rest],
 Vnto Duke Ioab bere þis byll,
 as man on lyue þat I lufe best,
 And byd *hym* faythfully yt fulfyll.»
 þe knyȝt knew not *his* ded was kest, 8130
 bot furth he ȝode *with* full gud wyll;
 to plesse Ioab was he full prest.
 þat boke to *hym* he bede
and bad *hym* *serue* yt sone.
 when Ioab had yt rede, 8135
 he saw what suld be done.

In the morning Uriah was set in a very dangerous place. When he had been killed by the men of the city, the king was glad to possess his wife.

679 And on þe morn maystrys he mays
 als he phylsteyns wold fere.
 Syr vrre sett he in swylke place
 whore he wyst þei suld do *hym* dere. 8140
 And sone a way fro *hym* he gays.
 þen þei *with* in were wyse of were
 And sees þat he no help hays;
 through þe body þei con *hym* bere. 8145
 þus was he saklese slayn,
 þat shaply vnder scheld.
 þe kyng þerfor was fayn
his wyf þat he myȝt weld.

678. 2 MS. treyst / 6 knew above the line | — 679. 9 MS. slaklese.

- 680 he wedyd hyr *with* mekyll wyn
 8150 *and* mad hyr to be crowned qwene
 All fort[o] couer þat *cursyd* syn
 þat þei had done þem two be twen,
 ffor þe grett state god sett hym in
 mad hym kyng *with* crown clene.
 8155 To greyue hym þus he con be gyne,
and þat was on hym selfe sene.
 God toke not some vengiance,
 bot fyrst he wyll assay
 yf he *with* repentance
 8160 wyll mend whyls he may.

He married her and made her queen in order to cover up their cursed sin. Before taking vengeance God wanted to try if David would amend his ways.

- fol. 77^a 681 The *prophett* natan sone he sent
 to ierusalem, þat ryche Cyte.
 Als god wold, wyghly he wentt
 both to kyng Daud *and* barsabe.
 8165 »*ser* kyng», he says, »sen god hath lentt
 þat þou sall deme in ylke degre,
 A thyng þat falys to þi jugment
 am I comyn forto aske of þe.
 Als þe *pertys* hath prayd,
 8170 so sall I say þe sone.
 And *ser*, when I haue sayd,
 os þou demys, sal be done.

God sent Nathan the prophet to David and Bath-sheba. He asked the king to pass judgement in the following case.

- 682 A myghty man *and* mekyll drede
 wuned heyr be syd down in a dale.
 8175 his catell was so wyd spred
 þat of þem cowth he not tale.
 A pure man was be syd hym sted
 þat had no catell, grett ne small,
 Owt takyn A schep þat he had fed
 8180 vp on a lamb *with* corne *and* cale.
 þis rych man mad a fest
 at home in his awn hall
 And sloght þe pur[e] mans best
 to glad his gastes *with* all.

A rich man, whose cattle were innumerable, lived near a poor man who had no cattle at all except a sheep which he had nourished up himself. The rich man made a feast and slew the poor man's beast to cheer his guests with.

680. 6 This line is written above 'and' þat was on hym self sene cancelled; cf. line 8 / — 681. 1 liber ihus Regum in upper margin / 12 MS. salbe / — 682. 11 MS. purys / s in mans above the line.

Nathan now asked what requital the rich man deserved. The king answered that the poor man should be compensated fourfold, and the rich man suffer death. The prophet said that the king had pronounced his own doom,

683 This question þat I [of þe] craue 8185
 how þis ryche man is worthy mede,»
 þe kyng sayd, »ser, so god me saue,
 þis thynke me ryȝt to rede:
 I deme þus þat þe pure man haue 8190
 fowr for on for his nede;
 And þe ryche man þat so wold raue
 to suffer ded for þat same dede.»
 þe prophett sayd, »certan,
 to be so best yt semyd.
 þis dome ys noyȝt in vayn; 8195
 þin awn ded hath þou demed,

because he had killed his knight and taken his wife. Sudden death should have stricken the king, but God had commanded it to be withdrawn. Instead one of the king's own sons would defile every one of his wives.

684 by cause þou gart kyll þi knyȝt
 — so semly er full seldom sawyn —
 And haldes his wyf agayns þe ryȝt 8200
 be cause your syns suld not be knawn,
 And hath enow both day *and* nyȝt
 lades *and* lemmans of þin awn.
 A sodan deth suld on þe lyȝt,
 bot god has bedyn yt be *with* drawn.
 And þus þerfor sall fall, 8205
 os I sall say on one,
 On of þin awn suns sall
 defowle þi wyfes ylk on.

The same son would drive David out of his kingdom, and the child to be born would die. That would be God's punishment for the king's crime against the innocent knight.

685 And þat same sun sal be slyke,
 thugh helpe *and* myȝt of oþer mo, 8210
 To cache þe owt of þi kyng ryke
and make þe fayn to fle þer fro.
 And þat ylke chyld þat now is like
 to be brøyȝt furth be twyx yow two
 Dede *with* his strengh sall sone yt stryke fol. 77 b 8215
 þat gain þerof þou sall for go.
 þis harme hath god þe hyght
 forto be sent vn soyght,
 ffor þou dyssaued þi knyȝt
 þat to þe trespass noyȝt. 8220

685. 1 MS. salbe / 2 'and' cancelled before helpe / 7 ihus liber Regum in upper margin.

- 686 And *oper* baylys abyd þe bus
 bot þou to god fast cry *and* call.
 when þe kyng herd yt bus be þus,
 down on þe ground flatt con he fall
- 8225 And made *Miserere mei deus*
 with *oper* psalmys, sum grett sum small,
 qwylike ar now eydence to vs
 at say to god þat gouerans all
- 8230 ffor gyfnes forto geyte,
 yf we in care be cast,
 Als Dauid dyd pennance grett
and prayd to god full fast.
- 687 Sone *aftur* þen by cowrse of kynd,
 when barsabe delyuer[ed] was,
- 8235 A fayrer fode myȝt no man fynd
 of hyd ne hew þen scho now has.
 kyng Dauid was þen mery in mynd,
 bot *aftur* sone he sayd alas,
 when þat he saw þe chyld was pynd
- 8240 with payns of dede *and* myȝt not pase.
 bot in his hert he toyȝt
 þat he to god wold pray
 And mowrn all þat he moight
 to mend yt, yf he may.
- 8245 688 he dyde away his garmentes gud,
and in a seke he sett hym down.
 he weped als he wold be wod
and kest powder apon his crown.
 be sex days wold he fang no fode
- 8250 ffor spech of bacheler ne barown.
 þer myȝt no [myrth] amend his mode
 to tyme þe barne to bere was bown.
 On þe VII [day], als swyth
 as þe chyld lyf was ende,
- 8255 he bad all men be blyth
 sen mowrnyng made no mende.

Other evils would come upon the king if he did not repent. When the king heard this, he fell on to the ground and said his *Miserere* and other psalms, just as we too should pray to Almighty God for forgiveness.

When soon afterwards Bath-sheba was delivered of a child, no fairer child was to be found. King David's joy was turned into sorrow when the child fell mortally ill. He prayed to God.

He threw off his garments, put on sackcloth, wept copiously and cast dust on his head. For six days he took no food, nothing could cheer him. But on the seventh day when the child was dead, he told his men to be merry because mourning did not make things better.

S 688. 6 ne of / 7 thyng / 9 VII cancelled after þe.

L 687. 9 fol. 156 a / Regum secundo on top of page / Bot / thought / 10 that / 11 mourne / that / myght / 12 amend it if — 688. 1 He did / garmentȝ goode / 2 sek / set him downe / 3 He / as / woode / 4 kast povdre vpon / crowne / 5 Be / noo foode / 6 for / bachilere / of omitted / barowne / 7 Ther myght noo myrth / moode / 8 the barn / bowne / 9 the sevent day as swith / 10 the childes life / end / 11 He / blith / 12 sith mowrnyng myght noht amend.

The first of David's sons was Amnon, a very brave man; the second was Absalom. Now Bath-sheba bore him a son and heir, named Solomon, as wise as Absalom was fair.

- 689 [Of Daudid sonnes before sayd we.
 the first of all that hight Amon,
 A semely man in sight to se,
 and the secund hight Absalon. 8260
 Now gate he an othre of Barsabee,
 and he was named Salamon,
 As wyse a man in his degree
 as euer god layd life vpon.
 As Absalon was fair, 8265
 so was Salamon wyse
 And after his fadir hair
 and kyng pereles of price.]

In the meantime Joab was besieging the city of Rabbah. The Philistines within were doomed for want of food. Joab then sent for King David, asking him to come and take charge himself. The king went there at once and the city was taken with great spoil.

- 690 In all þis tyme Duke Ioab lay
 þe Cyte of rabaat forto wyn. 8270
 ffor fawt of fode þei fell down fay,
 Phylysteyns þat ware *with* in.
 When Duke Ioab saw certayn day
 þat [þei] þare fro suld nedly twyn,
 hee sent [to] kyng Daudid forto say 8275
 [þat himself] suld com and be gyn.
 heyrof well payd was he,
 and ydder he wendes on one.
 þei wan sun þat Cyte
 and gatt þer welth grett wone. 8280

Hanun, the king of Ammon, was put to shame, his crown was taken from him, his domains and towns were burnt. Then David returned to Jerusalem with joy, but his joy did not last long.

- 691 Anon, þe kyng of amonys,
 was þore owtrad and al to shent.
 his crown þat was of grett price
 kyng Daudid has on his hed hen[t].
 The lordschepes þat about hym lyse fol. 78 a 8285
 and burghes brode be lyue ware brent.
 And when all was wrogh on þis wyse,
 to ierusalem *with* ioy þei wentt.
 þe kyng made all men glade
 with grett gyftes or þei gang. 8290
 grett ioy in hert he had,
 bot yt last not lang.

S 689. *The whole stanza missing* | — 690. 6 *Word cancelled before* þare | — 691. 2 alto | 4 hend.

L 689. *See text above* | 6 Salamon natus est *in right margin* | — 690. 1 this | 2 the Cite | Rabat | Wyn | 3 faute f foode they | downe fast | 4 Philistiens that were within | 6 that they therfro shuld | 7 He | a messenger to king | 8 that hym self shuld come | begyn | 9 Therof wele | 10 thidre | anoone | 11 They | sone that Cite | 12 had ther | goode woone | — 691. 1 Anoone the | Amonyse | 2 there outrayd | all to | 3 His crowne that | grete prise | 4 on his heued has hent | 5 lordshipes that aboute | 6 Burghes broode belyve wer | 7 wrought | this | 8 Ierusalem | ioye they went | 9 The king | glad | 10 grete | they | 11 Grete | 12 it lasted nocht.

- 692 he had A doyghtur his hert was on,
 heygh Thamar, o[s] I told be for[n]e.
 8295 Scho was systur to Absolon;
 þei both ware of a moyder born.
 hyr eldest broþer þat heygh Amon,
 he mad mornyng myday *and* morn.
 And fowle he be gan to fon
 8300 to haue hyr lufe, or els be lorn.
 hyre on so con he thynke,
and for he durst not say,
 he myȝt not ette ne drynke
 bot [peryst] *and* wast a way.
- 8305 693 A seruant þat was to hym nere
and most of all [his] counsels knew,
 he saw his maystur make yll chere
and oft systhys chaunged his hyd *and* hew.
 he sayd, »ser, tell vnto me heyre
 8310 what thyng þe noys now of new.
 ffull gud legians I sall þe lere,
 or ellys trest neuer that I be trew.»
 he sayd, »þus euyll I fare,
 and bot I sped, I spyll,
 8315 My systur, fayr Thamar,
 bot I hyr weld at wyll.»

Tamar, David's daughter, and Absalom, his son, were born of the same mother. Amnon, Tamar's eldest brother, desired her and wasted away for love.

A faithful servant who saw his master's affliction asked him why he was so unhappy. Amnon told him about his love for his fair sister.

- 694 »A ser», he sayd, »take myrth o mell
and for þis ded be not a dred.
 ffeyn yow seke ose so be fell,
 8320 *and* say þou may not pase þi bed.
 The kyng, þi fader, when he heyryst tell,
 wyll come to se how þou ert sted.
 Pray hym Thomar may *with* þe dwell,
 for of hyr lyst þe best be fed.
 8325 ffull sone he wyll þe graunt
 or þou þi myrthes myst,
 And so þou sall hyr hawnt
and luf euyn os þou lyst.»

The servant gave him advice. Amnon should pretend to be ill and unable to leave his bed. He should ask his father that Tamar, whom he liked best to be fed by, might be sent to him. Then he could have his will with her.

S 692. 8 to be / 10 not say cancelled before not / 12 prayd.

L 692. Ca. xiiij in right margin 1 He / a doghter / 2 hight / as / before / 3 She / suster / Absalon / 4 they / were / modre borne / 5 Hir / brothre that hight / 6 made mournyng mydday / morne / 7 fouly / began / fonne / 8 have hir love / elles / lorne / 9 Hire / gun / 11 He myght / ete / 12 peryst / waist away / — **693.** 1 seruand that to hym was / 2 all his counsell / 3 maister / evyll / 4 sithes / his omitted / hide / 5 He / here / 6 thing the newys / on / 7 goode legeaunce / shall the / 8 elles trow / 9 He said thus evill / fair / 10 spede / spill / 11 fair suster Thamar / 12 hir welde / — **694.** 1 Ay / omell / 2 this dede / noght / 3 ffeyne the / also / 4 thou / noght pas thy / 5 king thy fadre / heres / 6 wolle / thou art / 7 Thamar / *With* the / 8 hir list the / 9 wolle the / 10 thou thy mirthes myst / 11 thou shall hire avaut / 12 lufe even as the.

This proposal was to Amnon's taste. When Tamar had come to feed her brother, he sent away all his men and ordered them to bolt the doors. He told his sister what he wanted of her.

- 695 Thys *purpase* was well to *his* pay,
and sone all *þis* was was done in ded. 8330
 [So] Thamar was comyn on a day
 hyr broþer frendly [for] to fede.
 þen wysed he all *his* men away
and bad þem spere all as þei *þede*.
 And to *his* systur con he say, 8335
 »My ded ys dyȝt *with* outyn dred.
 No bettur boyt may be,
 bot þou þis *grace* wyll gyfe:
 To werke my wyll *with* þe.
 I may no langer lyfe. 8340

But Tamar was dismayed and asked her brother to leave her alone. He must not mention such a sinful thing again, but lift up his heart to heaven and pray to God for forgiveness.

- 696 we ar heyr in *our* howse at hame, fol. 78 b
and non sall wytt þis, I warrand.»
 when Thamar hard, hyr hert was tame,
and for ferd tremled fotte *and* hand.
 Scho sayd, »broþer, lett be for schame 8345
and for wreth of god all weldand.
 Well leuer me ware of lyfe be lame
and lordschep lose *and* lefe þis land.
 No more þis mote þou neuyn, 8350
 þat sory *and* synfull ys,
 Bot heyue þi hert to heuyn
and aske god for gyfnes.

If it became known that he had tried to induce his sister to such a sin, great vengeance would be taken for it by the king and their kin. Amnon, knowing that all the doors were bolted, did not care what she said, and forced her.

- 697 And haue in mynd, dere broþer [am]one,
 how men wold maruell, both more *and* myn,
 To here þou suld so fowly fon 8355
 þi systur forto seke *with* syn.
 grett vengians wold be tan þeron
 both *with* [þe] kyng *and* our kyn.
 ffor wyst my broþer absolon,
 full mekyll wo yt wold be gyn.» 8360
 Amon wyst all was sperd;
 hyr sawys he sett not by.
 ffowle *with* hyr he ferd
and forst hy[r] felously.

S 695. 3 Tyll / — 697. 1 a none / 12 hys / felous ly.

L 695. 1 This purpos / wele vnto / 2 this / doone / dede / 3 So / comen / 4 hire broþre full frendly forto / 5 fol. 156 b / Then / 6 theym spere euer as they yede / 7 suster he gun / 8 deid is dight withouten drede / 9 better bote / 10 thov this / wolle / 11 wirk / will / the / 12 noo lenger / — 696. 1 We are here / oure hous / home / 2 noon shall witt this / warand / 3 When / herd hire / 4 foote / 5 She said broþre let / shame / 6 wreth / 7 Wele leuer / were / 8 lordship / leyve this / 9 Nomore this thing thou neven / 10 that fowle / is / 11 lyft thyn / heven / 12 forgyvenes / — 697. 1 have / broþre Amon / 2 wald mervell / 3 here tell thou shuld / fouly / 4 thi sister / 5 Grete vengeance / taken theron / 6 othre / 7 wist / broþre Absalon / 8 mych woo it / begyn / 9 sparrd / 10 hire sawes / set nocht / 11 ffouly / hire / fared / 12 forced hire felowusly.

- 8365 698 The maydyn was full maysed *and* mate,
 bot of hyr bale no butt may be.
 Son os A hownd he con hyr hatte
and sayd he wold not on hyr see.
 pat scho suld go wyghtly hyr gate
- 8370
 owt of his hows þen commawnd he.
 Scho prayd of leue tyll yt ware latte
 þat scho myȝt pase in preuete.
 ffor spech he wold not spare,
 no lenger suffer hyr lend.
- 8375
 hyr hed [scho] hyde *and* hare;
 sore wepand con scho wend.
- 699 So went scho furth *with* mekyll wo
 tyll Absolon hyr broþer hall.
 And when he saw hyr gretand [g]o,
 he had ferly what suld be fall.
 »Systur«, he sayd, »how ys it so?
 who hath þe greued, grett or small?» —
 »My broþer Amon *and* no mo.«
 þen how be tyde scho told hym all.
- 8385
 No meruell was to mene
 yf he in mynd ware meuyd.
 bot sembland non was sene
 in hert how he was greued.
- 700 Thamar þus tuke he hym tyll
and made hyr myrth *with* all his mayn.
 he leyttē Amon haue all his wyll
 os he had noyȝt wyst of þe trayn.
 So all þis stryfe was haldyn styll
 vnto two ȝeres was past playn.
- 8395
 And þen als end comys of all yll,
 be fell in þe seson certayn
 þat men suld clype þer schepe,
and whore þer catell lendes
- fol. 79 a
 8400
 Suld ylk man take kepe
 þer for to fest þer frendes.

Then he began to hate her and told her to leave his house. He would not even let her stay until it was dark. Having covered her head and hair she went away weeping.

When she came to Absalom's hall, he asked who had grieved her. She told him everything. No wonder that he was upset. But he kept his feelings within him.

Absalom let Tamar stay in his house and kept ostensibly on good terms with Amnon. When two years had passed, it was time for the sheep to be shorn. Everybody should then hold a feast for his friends.

S 698. 11 Euyll hyr yryhed hyde / — **699.** 3 so / — **700.** 11 In upper margin liber *ijus* Regum.

L 698. 1 madyn / mased / 2 hire / noo bote myght / 3 Sone as a hound / gun hire hate / 4 said / hire se / 5 That she shuld wightly goo hire / 6 oute / hous commaunded / 7 She / leve to hit were late / 8 that she myght pas / privete / 10 ne suffre hire lenger lende / 11 Euyll hurled heved and here / 12 gun she pas / — **699.** 1 she / mych woo / 2 to Absalon his broþre / 3 And omitted / When / hir / goo / 4 shuld befall / 5 Sister / says / is / soo / 6 has the greved grete / 7 broþre / moo / 8 then / betyd she / 9 Noo mervell / 10 thogh / were meved / 11 Bot / was noon / 12 how he in hert / greved / — **700.** 1 thus he tuke / vntyll / 2 hire / mayne / 3 He let / have / 4 as / nocht / the trayne / 5 this / holden / 6 vnto twoo ȝeres were passed playne / 7 þen omitted / as ende comes / evyll / 8 befell / the season certayne / 9 That / shuld clip their shepe / 10 where their / 11 Shuld ych / 12 ther forto feste their.

Absalom invited his father the king to a great feast. But the king excused himself and told Absalom to invite his brothers and friends. Absalom did so, all the time thinking of what Amnon had done to Tamar.

- 701 ffell absolon for þis same thyng
ordand a grett mangery.
he bad þerto his fader þe kyng,
bot he excused hym skylfully.
he bad hym take both old *and* ȝyng
of his breyþer to be hym by
And frendes, als fallys for swylke doying,
and als he demed, he dyd in hy.
he bad his broþer Amon
to se how frendes suld fare.
þe Ded ay thynkes he on
þat was done to Thamar.

At the splendid feast he commanded his servants to smite off Amnon's head when he was well drunk. They did so.

- 702 The fest was ordand fayr *and* fyne
and purvayd in ylk poynt *perfy*t.
Sone Absolon sayd vnto his hyne
how Amon had done hym dyspytt,
»When ȝe se hym well dronkyn of wyne,
his hed þen smertly ȝe of smytt.
ffor he mysded to me *and* myne,
now sall I fand yt forto qwytt.»
þei dyd als he commawnd,
and sone was Amon slayn.
so for fowle luf in land
ar men oft put to payn.

Absalom's other brothers and all his friends went to Jerusalem. King David mourned greatly and said that Absalom should rightly atone for his evil deed. His friends shared in his grief.

- 703 his breþer, when þei saw þis syȝt,
and all his frendes ware fowle afrayd.
To ierusalem þei went full wyȝt
and told how Amon was be trayd.
kyng Dauid, qwen þis D[ol]e was dyȝt,
»al[a]s, both ware my suns», he sayd,
»bot Absolon by reson ryȝt
sall dere aby þis byttur brayd.»
he mornyd *and* mad grett mone
for both þoo breþer sake.
so dyd his frendes ylkon
and wered weked wr[a]ke.

S 702. 2 *perfytyly* with 1y cancelled / 6 hed above the line / 12 putto, followed by pyn, cancelled / — **703.** 5 Duke / 10 lines 10 and 12 transposed / 12 wreke.

L 701. 1 It befell Absalon / this thing / 2 grete maungery / 3 And bad therto / fadre the / 4 skylfully / 5 He / olde / ying / 6 brethre / 7 as fals to such dooyng / 8 as / did / 9 He / brothre / 10 see / shuld / 11 The dede / 12 that he did / — **702.** 1 feste / faire / 2 purveyd / ych / *perfitte* / 3 Absalon said to / 4 doon / despite / 5 ye see / wele dronken / 6 þen omitted / of smertly luke ye smyte / 7 mys did / 8 Now shall / it / quyte / 9 They did as / commaund / 10 slayne / 11 So / lufe / 12 put to payne / — **703.** fol. 157 a / Regum secundo in upper margin / 1 His brethre / they / this syȝt / 2 all omitted / fowl were affrayde / 3 Ierusalem they / wyght / 4 betrayde / 5 Kyng / when this doell / dyght / 6 allas / were / sonnes / sayde / 7 Bot Absalon / ryght / 8 shal / aby this bitter brayde / 9 He mourned / made grete / 10 thos brethre / 11 So did / ychoone / 12 warred wykked wreke.

704 þen Absolon was fayn to fle
and soiorndd for certan tyde
 In Iessor with þe kyng of Cirre,
 8440 his syb man on his moyder syde.
 And þore he bod by ȝeres thre
 his fader frenschep to abyd.
 þen Ioab toyȝt asay wold he
 to make acord all harmys to hyd.
 8445 he soyght A sotell gyn
and ordand of þis thyng:
 A woman suld be gyn
 forto carpe with þe kyng.

Absalom fled to Geshur and stayed with the king of Syria, a kinsman of his, for three years. Then Joab thought of a cunning scheme to bring about a reconciliation.

8450 705 he gart A lady go *and* grette
and ryue hyr hare full rewwfully.
 scho fell before þe kynges fette,
and mercy lord lowd con scho cry.
 he sayd, »my help heyr I þe hette,
 tell vnto me þi harmys in hy.» —
 8455 »A mercy lord, my bale þou bete,
 for dred of þi law lorn am I.
 fol. 79 b I had two suns certayn;
 both ware full fayr of face.
 On hath þat oþer slayn
 8460 as þei playd in a place.

He made a woman go to the king, tearing her hair pitifully and imploring the king's mercy. She told the king how one of her two sons had killed the other when they were playing.

706 My sun þat dyd yt con hym with draw
 to wyldernese, full [wyll] of wone,
 ffor men says þat he sall by law
 be turment, *and* he may be tone,
 8465 And suffer Ded; þis is þar saw
 þat makes me morne *and* make þis mone.
 þat ware to me a weked thraw,
 þer I had two, forto haue none.
 þerfor þis grace me gyfe
 8470 sen þou all sydes may saue.
 Say þat my sun sall lyfe,
 I kepe noyȝt els to craue.»

After that he had run away to the wilderness. She was now afraid that she would lose her second son too, who according to the law should be punished by death.

S 705. 5 I cancelled before heyr / — 706. 1 he con.

L 704. 1 Then Absalon / fayne / 2 sojourned for a certayn / 3 Gessur / the /
 Cyre / 4 kynsman / modre / 5 ther he did abyde yeres / 6 fadres frendship forto
 abyde / 7 Then / thought assay / 8 acorde / harmes / hyde / Ca. xiiij in right margin
 / 9 He soght a suttell / 10 this / 11 shuld begyn / 12 carp / the / — 705. 1 He
 made a / goo / grete / 2 rive hire here / rwwfully / 3 He / þe omitted / kynges Dauid
 fete / 4 lorde / lowd omitted / gun she / 5 He / myn helpe here / the hete / 6
 thyn harmes / 7 Ay / bayle to / 8 drede / thy / lorne / 9 hade twoo sonnes
 certayne / 10 were / fair / 11 The thoone that othre has slayne / 12 they / both
 in / — 706. 1 sonne that did that dede / he omitted / gun / 2 wildernes / will
 / woone / 3 þat omitted / shal be / 4 taken / 5 suffre Deid thus / there / 6 that
 causes / this moone / 7 That were / wykked thraw / 8 Where / twoo / have noone
 / 9 Therefore this / me omitted / gyve / 10 sith thou / things / save / 11 that /
 sonne may lyve / 12 noght elles / crave.

The king comforted her and promised to let her son live. Then the woman asked him to pardon his own son in the same manner; otherwise men would think that he did wrong.

- 707 The kyng in hert þen had pety.
 he *comforth* hyr þat men myȝt here.
 »Dame, þi sun sall lyf,» says he, 8475
 »þerfor of mornyng mend þi chere.»
 þen yt was solace to see.
 scho sayd, »*ser* kyng, *with* crown clere,
 Sen þou hath graunt *mercy* to me,
 graunt þi sun on þe same manere. 8480
 Sen myn sall *mercy* haue
and grace on ground to gang,
 þin awn sun þou saue,
 men wyll deme þou dose wrang.»

David understood that Joab was behind this, and commanded him to bring Absalom home. Joab delivered the message, and the king and Absalom were soon friends again.

- 708 kyng Daid to þis tale toke hede. 8485
 he wyst well what þis woman ment,
 And þat yt was Duke Ioab dede,
and þerfor aftur hym sone he sent.
 he bad þat he suld go gud sped
and tell to absolon his entent 8490
 fforto com home *and* haue no dred.
 þe messeg wyghtly is he went.
 þen ware þei frendes fast,
 þe kyng *and* absolon.
 So was þo plenyng past 8495
 for þe ded of Amon.

Absalom's beauty was marvellous. His hair weighed twenty pounds and was bright as gold. He was very powerful too. As long as men did what he wanted, he made no mischief, but if he was irritated, he was fell as fire.

- 709 Of Absolon is ferly fare
 to fynd how fayr he was to [s]yȝt,
 And of his making mekyll mare;
 he past all oþer men in myȝt. 8500
 Of XX libri wegh was his hare
 þat he had on his hed on heyght.
 And als clerkes con yt declare,
 like to gold wyre so was it bryght.
 To no maystrys he meued 8505
 whyls men dyd his desyre.
 bot and he ware oght greued,
 þen was he fell o[s] fyre.

S 707. 12 þat þou / — 708. 11 For þo see Kalén p. CXXI / — 709. 2 fyȝt / 12 of.

L 707. 1 then / pitee / 2 comforted hir that / myght / 3 thy sonne shal lyfe / 4 therefore / mourning amend thyn / 5 Then was it / forto se / 6 she said / With crowne / 7 Sith thou as graunt / 8 graunt thy sonne / the / maner / 9 Sith myne shal / have / 11 Thyne / sonne bot if save / 12 wolle / þat omitted / thou doos Wrang / — 708. 1 Kyng / this taylor take / 2 wele / the Woman / 3 that it / 4 therefore after / 5 And bad that / shuld goo goode spede / 6 Absalon / 7 come / have noo drede / 8 this message Wyghtly he is Went / 9 then Wer they / 10 the / Absalon / 11 Was the pleyng / 12 the deid / — 709. 1 Absalon / grete mervell / 2 knawe howe faire / Was / fyght / 3 mych more / 4 othre / men omitted / myght / 5 twentyn pound weght / here / 6 that / hede / hyght / 7 as oure clerkes can / yt omitted / 8 lyk / Wyre / Was / bryght / 9 noo maistrees / meved / 10 whilst / did / 11 Bot / were / greved / 12 then Was / as.

- 710 he hath geydderd of gold *and* fee
 8510 for hym *and* mony oþer moo,
 And þerof gafe he grett plente
and mad þem frendes þat ware his foo,
 fol. 80 a þat souerance of þat same Cyte
and oþer Cetys sere also.
 8515 And þe most of þe kynges menezge
 ware wylly *with* hym forto go.
 So be IIII ȝeres ware past,
 he had so wysly wrought:
 All folke ware *with* hym fast
 8520 *and* to his socour soght.
- 711 So when he wyst both old *and* ȝyng
 wold holly a[t] his ledyng lende,
 he asked leue at his lord þe kyng
 vnto Ebron forto wende
 8525 his sacrafyce þor forto bryng,
 als he had heyȝt *with* hert *and* hende.
 The kyng sayd, »sun in my blessing.»
 bot of his cast no thyng he kend.
 Of charys *and* chualry
 8530 grett plente war purvayde,
 And furth he wendes in hy
 tyll Ebron, als he sayd.
- 712 Cytes *and* towns, when þei herd tell
 þat absolon so was assent,
 8535 At home þem lyst no langer dwell,
 bot *with* hym holy ar þei went.
 And meruell had þei þem omell
 what thyng he had in his entent.
 bot his cheue counsell, archyttofell,
 8540 þer wyst no mo men what he ment.
 when he come in Ebron,
 whor hym lyked best to be,
 he gart þo men ylkon
 to hym self make sewrte.

From the riches he had gathered he gave great gifts to his foes so that they became his friends. After four years everybody was attached to him.

Knowing that everybody was on his side, he obtained the king's leave to go to Hebron to offer his sacrifice. The king knew nothing about his plans. Absalom went to Hebron with a great number of chariots and chivalry.

People in cities and towns would no longer stay at home but went with Absalom, wondering what he had in mind. Nobody but his chief counsellor, Ahithophel, knew.

S 710. 8 wylly in the upper margin, marked to be inserted after ware | — 711. 2 all / 8 o cancelled before bot.

L 710. 1 He has gedered / 2 many oþre moo / 3 therof gawe / grete / 4 made theym / that were / 5 The soueranyys / that / Cite / 6 oþre cites / 7 the moste / the / meny / 8 were wylle / to goo / 9 fol. 157 b / four ȝeres were / 10 wisely / 11 Ca. xv in left margin / were With / 12 socoure | — 711. 1 Wyst / olde / ying / 2 at / 3 He / leve of / lorde the / 4 Vnto / 5 His sacrifice there for to / 6 as / hight / 7 said sonne / blissyng / 8 kast noo / kende / 9 chares / chivalry / 10 grete / were purvayd / 12 to / as | — 712. 1 Citees / townes / they / 2 that Absalon / 3 theym list noo lenger / 4 are they / 5 mervell / they theym / 6 thing / 7 Bot / chief / Achitofell / 8 ther / noo man / 9 When / 10 where / liked / 11 He / thoo / ychoon / 12 surtee. |

Everybody was ready to do his bidding. All the country came and paid homage to him, promising to make him their king. Then he told them about his plans.

- 713 þei ware full bown to his bedyng, 8545
 both knyȝt, swyer, [knaue] and page.
 þei honerd hym ouer all thyng
 and sett hym vp in certan stage.
 þen all þe cuntre, old and ȝyng,
 com to hym and made homage 8550
 And heyȝt to hald hym for þer kyng
 and werke his wyll with outyn wage.
 When all ware same assent
 and mad seurty certayn,
 þen told he his entent 8555
 and all his purpase playn.

Absalom promised to look after them well. It would be best to drive away his father, or if he stayed, to cut him down. His men agreed to this wicked proposal.

- 714 »sers», he sayd, »sene ȝe deme
 me to be kyng and were þe crown,
 your land and yow well sall I ȝeme
 and maynten yow in all reson. 8560
 my fader ys fayrest forto fleme,
 or yf he byde, to bryng hym down.»
 þei say, »ser, sertes so wyll yt seme;
 to make þis bargan ar we bown.»
 þis was a curssed cum[m]and
 his fader so to spyll. 8565
 And ȝett feyll foyles he fand
 þat falsched to fulfyll. fol. 80 b

King David, on receiving this news, commanded his men to make haste and flee before it should be too late.

- 715 þen kyng Dauid herd tythyng tell
 þat his awn sun with sytt hym soght, 8570
 And how þat fals archytofell,
 his counsellar, was [with] hym broyȝt.
 he ordand sone his men o mell
 to remeue in all þat þei moght.
 he sayd, »we be ded and we dwell; 8575
 I know so wele þer wekyd toyȝt.
 And yf þei here vs t[o]ke
 or sege[d] þis Cete,
 þen war ouer latte to loke
 to qwylke syd we suld flee.» 8580

S 714. 9 cummand or cunnand / 10 forto / — 715. 9 take.

L 713. 1 They wer / bowne / bidding / 2 knyght squyere knave and / 3 They honored / all kynthyng / 4 set / certayn / 5 Then / the / ying / 6 come vnto / 7 hight / there / 8 wirke / withouten / 9 were samen / 10 made suertee certayne / 11 Then / 12 purpose playne / — 714. 1 Sirres / sith that ye / 2 the crowne / 3 Youre / you wele shal / yeme / 4 mayntene you / 5 My fadre is best / 6 if / byd / downe / 7 They / ser wanting / wolle it / 8 this / bowne / 9 This / curssed cummant / 10 fadre forto / 11 yit many foys / 12 that falsed / fullfyll / — 715. 1 When / tithandȝ / 2 that / awne son / site / 3 that / Achitofell / 4 counsell / with / broght / 5 He / omell / 6 remve / that they myght / 7 He / deid / We / 8 their wiked thought / 9 if they / tuke / 10 seged this Citee / 11 Then wer / late / luke / 12 Which syde We shuld.

716 he bad þe byschop abyathar
 and his wyfes with dreere mode
 And oper clerkes þat with þem ware
 in þer sere state als þei stude
 8585 To dwell þer styl for any care,
 to kepe þe arke of god full gud,
 And send hym word ay how þei fare
 vnto þe flome or be yond þe flode.
 Ten wyfes with oper frendes
 8590 þor leues he soiorand so.
 And furth þen with hym wendes
 sex hunderth and no moo.

He told Abiathar, his wives and the priests to stay there and take care of the ark of God. Then they were to send word to him at the river how they fared. Ten wives he left behind and went off with six hundred men.

717 Als he went apon A heght hyll,
 he saw þe Cyte and burghis by,
 8595 qwylike he was wunt at weld at wyll
 and was dyssauyd fro sodanly.
 þen loued he god with steuyn full styl
 and sayd, »þis wo am I worthy.«
 So come A man mornand hym tyll,
 8600 þat Cosyn was and heyght Cusy.
 kyng Dauid sayd, »I trest
 to þe þat þou be trew.
 ffull fayn I wold þou frayst
 yf þat þou may remewe

From a high hill he saw the city and the towns that he had lost so suddenly. Then he praised God and said that he deserved this woe. A mournful man, David's cousin, came to him; his name was Hushai. David asked him

8605 718 Archytofell, þat fals is ay,
 oute of þe counsell of my sun.
 he is abowt both nyȝt and day
 to werke þat we in bale ware bun.»
 þen Cusy says, »I sall asay,
 8610 for all þis falshed hath he fun.»
 And [with] þis word he went his way
 to þe Cete ward, as he was wun.
 This mater sal be ment
 more furth, als yt be fell;
 8615 bot how Kyng Dauid went,
 is fyrst now forto tell.

to remove the false Ahithophel from his son's counsel. Hushai promised to try and went to the city. But more about that later. Let us first tell of David's doings.

S 716. 10 perhaps [sorowand], cf. L; see, however, 529: 4 and 546: 4 | — **717.** 2 sawþe with sign of separation | — **718.** 9 salbe | 10 'and' more.

L 716. 1 He | the bishop abiathar | 2 dreery moode | 3 othre | that With hym wer | 4 their | as they stooode | 5 there | chare | 6 the ark | goode | 7 worde | they | 8 where he was besyde the floode | 9 othre | 10 ther leyves | soroand | 11 then | 12 hunderyth | the rest of the line missing | — **717.** 1 As | vp on a high | 2 the Cite | Burghs | 3 Which | wont to welde | 4 and omitted | dyseased so | 5 Then loved | steven | 6 this woo I am | 7 a | mournand | vntyll | 8 that cosyn | hight | 9 Kyng | trayste | 10 the that thou | 11 fayne | thou frayste | 12 if that thou myght remew | — **718.** 1 Achitofell that | 2 the | myn sonne | 3 He | aboute | nyȝt | 4 wirke that | were bonne | 5 fol. 158 a | Regum secundo in upper margin | Then | sais | shal assay | 6 this falsed has | fonne | 7 With this worde | 8 toward the Citee | wonne | 9 shal | 10 And omitted | as it befell | 11 Bot | king | 12 first.

In the morning David met one Ziba, steward to Mephibosheth. He was bringing bread and wine as a present to the people. He told the king that his master proposed to make himself king.

- 719 Sone on þe morn *with* Dauid mett
fro þe same Cyte on Cyba,
was stewerd to Mifbosett,
þat was the sun of Ionatha. 8620
both bred *and* wyn furth has he fett, fol. 81 a
a *presand* to þat pepyll [and] ma.
Dauid asked sone, when þei ware sett,
»how farys *our* frend þat þou com fra?»
he says, »*ser*, sen þou went, 8625
he is a bowt to bryng
sere folke to his assent
And says he wyll be kyng.»

David said that Mephibosheth had poor qualifications to govern a country. Therefore, he would give to Ziba all that he had before given to Mephibosheth.

- 720 Kyng Dauid says, »*sertes*, þat ware schame;
þou wott well he may do no dede. 8630
ffor he is lytyll, *and* he is lame
and no thyng lyke a land to lede.
Me thynke þat boy is forto blame;
þerfor sone sall I spyll his spede.
Syba, þou sall haue þat same 8635
þat I gaf hym when he had nede.»
þen Syba went agayn;
in hert he was full glade
And toke all power playn
þat Myfbosett hade. 8640

But David found no comfort and went on his way. He then met a cousin of Saul's, Shimei, by whom he was grossly insulted. His knights wanted to kill him, but David stopped them, saying that he suffered justly.

- 721 Kyng Dauid coud no *comforth* ken
bot cayred furth *with* his *cumpany*.
A grett mysdoer mett hym þen,
kyng saul cosyn Se[m]jey.
he werred Dauid *and* all his men 8645
and spytt on hym dyspytfully
And stones kest *and* fowle[s] [f]ene
and oft sythys sayd apon hym fy.
Knyztes com fast hym to kyll,
bot Dauid bad þem blyn, 8650
»I wott yt is goddes wyll;
I suffer yt for my syn.

S 719. 4 Ioratha cancelled before Ionatha / 5 liber ijus in upper margin / 6 at (for and) above þat cancelled / 8 frendes / 9 sers / — 721. 4 Seney / 7 fowled kene.

L 719. 1 Ca. xvj in right margin / the morne / met / 2 the / Cite / Siba / 3 Was steward / myfboset / 4 that / sonne / 5 Both brede / wyne / fet / 6 *presant* / that people and mo / 7 they wer set / 8 hows faires oure frende that thou come fro / 9 He / *ser* sith thou / 10 aboute / 11 Sere / 12 and / Wolle / — 720. 1 sayd / that were shame / 2 thou wote wele / doo noo / 3 litell / 4 noo thing / 5 thinke that / 6 therefore / shal / 7 Siba thou shal / that / 8 that / gave / 9 Then Siba / agayne / 10 glad / 11 tuke / playne / 12 that Mifboset had / — 721. 1 covth / 2 went / company / 3 grete mysdooer met he then / 4 Saul / Semey / 5 He werryd / 6 spit / dispituly / 7 stoones he kast / fowles fen / 8 sithes said vpon / 9 Knightes come / forto / 10 them / 11 wot it / 12 suffre it.

722 what meruel ys yt of þis dede
 A hethyn hownd me forto hatte
 8655 Sen myn awn sun wyll haue no dred
 me forto brew all þis debate.»
 bot aftur sone, os men may rede,
 þis grome þat greued hym in þe gate
 8660 be Dauid dome he had his mede
 and lost his lyf, yf yt ware late.
 In þis tym absolon,
 as kyng with playn power,
 Was comyn owt of Ebron
 to ierusalem ryȝt nere.

It was no wonder, said David, if a heathen dog hated him when even his own son caused him such affliction. But in due time the man got what he deserved. Absalom had now come close to Jerusalem as king with full power.

8665 723 When þei ware in þat Cyte sett,
 Archytofell, þat cursed knyȝt,
 he sayd, »ser, and þou do þi dett,
 to Dauid sall þou doles dyȝt;
 8670 gar all his wyfes furth fast be fette
 hym to reprove by reson ryȝt,
 And lyg by þem — for no thyng lett —
 playnly in þe pepyll syȝt.
 And þerby sall þ[e]i wytt
 and be exempyll se
 8675 fol. 81 b þat luf sall neuer be knytt
 be twyx þi fader and þe.

When they were in the city, Athithophel advised Absalom to fetch David's wives and lie with them in the sight of all people, whereby it should be clear that no love would ever be possible between Absalom and his father.

724 yf any gabbers wold hym glose
 to say þat he suld come agayn,
 8680 by þis syȝt sall þei well suppose
 þat he sall neuer haue myrth ne mayn.
 So sall he all his lordschep lose
 and forto flee farre be full fayn.
 þen of þe chefe sall þou haue chose
 þat now ar to his bedyng bayn.»
 8685 ffull wo þe wemen wore
 when he so wekydly wroght.
 þat Natan told be fore
 bud vnto end be broght.

Any talk about David's returning to power would be stopped by that sight. When he had fled, Absalom could have his choice among David's chiefs. The women were much distressed by this wicked deed, but Nathan's prediction was to come true.

S 723. 9 þou.

L 722. 1 What mervell is it / this / 2 a / hound / hate / 3 Sith / sonne
 wolle / noo drede / 4 wirke / this / 5 Bot after / some omitted / as / 6 this / that
 greved / the / 7 Be / 8 lyfe if it wer / 9 this tyme Absalon / 10 playne powere /
 11 comen oute / 12 Ierusalem right / — 723. 1 they wer / that Cite set / 2
 Achitofell that cursed knight / 3 He / thou doo thi det / 4 shall thou doyles
 dight / 5 Make / fet / 6 reprove / right / 7 theym / noo thing let / 8 the
 people sight / 9 therby shall they wit / 10 by ensample / 11 That / shal / knit /
 12 betwix thy fadre / the / — 724. 1 If / 2 that / shuld / agayne / 3 By this sight
 shal they wele / 4 that / shal / have noo mayne / 5 shal / lordship / 6 fle far /
 fayne / 7 Then / the chief shal thou have / 8 that / biding bayne / 9 woo the
 women were / 10 wikkedly / 11 Bot Nathan / before / 12 it shuld so to ende.

Hushai came to Absalom and greeted him with courteous words. Absalom told him he could spare himself such talk because he had formerly been David's friend and counsellor. But Hushai said that now that David was no longer in power, he wanted to be with Absalom.

- 725 Cusy com, kyng Dauid frend,
to absolon, os I sayd ayre. 8690
he haylsed hym *with* wordes hend
and loued god fast for his wele fare.
Absolon asked what he mende
and sayd, »swylke spekyng suld þou spare.
with Dauid was þou wunt to wende, 8695
chefe of his counsell to declare.»
he sayd, »*ser*, so I was
whyls he stud in degre;
Now lyst me lett hym pase
and lede my lyf *with* þe. 8700

It was God's will, said Hushai, that Absalom should now be king. He promised him allegiance with heart and hand. Absalom suspected no evil and accepted Hushai as counsellor. Nobody could so well find means to lessen Ahithophel's power.

- 726 I wott well yt is god[es] wyll
þat þou be kyng *with* crown clere,
And at all pepyll come þe [vntyll]
to *serue* þe in *seruyce* sere.
þat for ward wyll I fayn fulfyll 8705
with hert *and* hand, I hett þe here.»
Absolon trowed of non yll
and toke hym of his counsell nere.
Cusy in cowrt sall dwell;
ys non so grett to geysse 8710
All for archytofell
to make his lordschep lesse.

That wicked man asked Absalom for ten thousand men to capture David; they would get quite near him that very night. Absalom found his proposal good, but wanted first to ask Hushai's counsel.

- 727 þat wekyd man þen went full wyght
to Absolon *and* says his toyȝt,
»*ser*, þou sall haue no rest ne [r]yȝt 8715
tyll Dauid vnto ded be broyȝt.
Take me ten thowsand men of myȝt;
we sall not sesse or he be soyȝt.
we sall [be] nere þis ylk nyȝt,
and bot I take hym, trow me noyȝt.» 8720
Absolon says, »sawyns fayle,
a fayr *profer* þou mase.»
bot fyrst he asked counsell
of Cusy in þis case.

S 726. 1 is inserted above the line / lykes cancelled before god / wyll written above þat of the next line / 3 to þe / — **727.** 3 myȝt / 9 fayll altered to fayle.

L 725. 1 come king / frende / 2 Absalon as he / are / 3 He / hende / 4 loved / fast omitted / of / welefare / 5 Absalon / 6 such / shuld thou / 7 With / thou wount / 8 chief / 9 He said / 10 whilst / stooode / degree / 11 list / let / pas / 12 my life / the / — **726.** 1 fol. 158 b / knawe wele it / godes / 2 that thou / crowne / 3 that all the people shal turne the vntyll / 4 serve the / *seruice* / 5 That forwarde wold / fayne / 6 hete the / 7 Absalon / noon yvyll / 9 courte gun / 10 is noone / grete / ges / 11 Architofell / 12 lordship les / — **727.** 1 Ca. xvij in left margin / That wykked / then / wight / 2 Absalon he / thought / 3 *Ser* thou shal neuer have / no omitted / ryght / 4 to / deid / broght / 5 xij written above ten / thowsand / myght / 6 shal / cesse / soght / 7 We shal be nere this ych nyght / 8 trust / noght / 9 Absalon / saymefayle / 10 faire / thou makes / 11 Bot first / counsayle / 12 this.

- 8725 728 Cusy hath mynd both morn *and* noyne
to helpe Dauid in his nede,
And wele he wyst, yf þis ware done,
he suld be dede *with* outyn drede.
To absolon þus says he sone,
»ser, þis spekyng may not spede;
8730 Ten thowsand folke wold be full fone
fol. 82 a into A fere land forto lede.
þi fader is wunt to fyȝt,
and his folke er full fell.
8735 Ordand þou haue [more] myȝt
or þou [of] swylke maters mell.
- 729 Send aftur [all] þi knyȝtes kene
and aftur keyn men of þi kyn,
And wend þi self þore to be sene;
8740 lett non oþer þat wrschep wyn.»
Archytofell herd how þat þei men[e]
þat Cusy consell was cald in.
In hert he had so mekyll teyne
þat langer he wold not byd ne blyn.
8745 Bot herd he con hym hy
vntyll his howse at hame.
In anger *and* in enuy
he hanged hym self *with* schame.
- 730 On þis wyse was þe lordan lorn;
8750 we hope he hasted sone to hell.
And Cusy wentt sone on þe morn
to þe tempyll tythynges forto tell.
Abyathar he fand hym be forn
with mony mo mowrnand o mell.
8755 he told all how he had hym born,
þat hanged was archytofell.
And [he was] of consell
to byde [at] bed *and* borde.
þ[i]s tale fro tope to tale
8760 he told þem ylka word.

Hushai, always bent on helping David, knew that this would mean David's death. He said to Absalom that it would be foolish to attack such fierce enemies with only ten thousand men.

Absalom should place himself at the head of his forces and get the glory himself. When Abithophel heard this, he hurried home and hanged himself for shame.

Thus ended that villain. But Hushai went to the temple and told Abiathar and others everything.

S 728. 7 According to E. Ekwall fon(e) is a modification of an earlier whon (< OE hwōn), which was influenced by few (fa) and fele. *Philologica: The Malone Anniversary Studies, Baltimore, 1949, p. 144 ff. Cf. Kalén, p. XCII | 11 of | — 729. 5 menyd | — 730. 9 lest | 10 of.*

L 728. 1 has mynde / morne / none / 2 forto / this / 3 if this were doone / 4 shuld / deid withoute / 5 Absalon thus / 6 this / 7 thowsand / foone / 8 a fer / 9 Thy fadre / wont / 10 ar / 11 Ordayn the to have more myght / 12 thou of such / — 729. 1 after all thy knyghtes / 2 after kynde / thy / 3 wende thy / ther / 4 let noon otre that worship / 5 Achitofell / that omitted / they mene / 6 that / counsell Was called / 7 mych tene / 8 that lenger / Wold / abyde / 9 fast he gun / 10 vnto / hous / home / 11 angre / envy / 12 shame / — 730. 1 this / that lurdan lorne / 2 trow / 3 went / the morne / 4 the temple tithinges / 5 Abiathare / beforen / 6 many moo mowrnand omell / 7 He / borne / 8 that / Was Achitofell / 9 he was / counsayle / 10 abyde at / 11 The mater / top / tayle / 12 theym ych a worde.

He asked them to let David know what arrangements he had made. David ought to make his escape before Absalom came with powerful forces. They sent a message to David to that effect.

- 731 »werkes now,» he sayd, »by your wysdom
 þat kyng Dauid may here in hy
 how I haue ordand all *and* sum
 — I wott he wyl be fayn for þi —
 And byde hym flee be yond þe flum 8765
 for beldyng of his awn body.
 ffor Absolon his sun sall come
 agayns hym with grett cumpany.»
 letturs be lyue þei sent;
 þis sand was for þer sele. 8770
 wyse men so warly went;
 kyng Dauid wot ylk dele.

David fled across the river to Mahanaim, a great city, where the people welcomed him with great joy. They offered to let him stay there, wherever it pleased him. The city was well fortified.

- 732 when Dauid had þe letturs rede,
 well *comforth* in his hert was he. 8775
 ffurth ouer þe flum his folke he led
 to manahym, a grett Cyte.
 þe folke þat in þat sted ware sted
 welcumd hym with mekyll glee.
 And all þer beld to hym þei bed 8780
 to byd whore so hym self wold be.
 þat Cyte was walled so wele,
 þer myzt no man yt myne.
 Ne þei dowt no dele
 for gune ne grett ingyne.

David stayed there. Close by there lived four barons, who generously sent him food and promised to support him. David numbered four thousand knights. Absalom had also gathered a great number of knights.

- 733 kyng Dauid þore with blyse con byde 8785
and had at wyll what so he wald.
 IIII barons wuned þer be syde 8790
 þat send hym vytell all vnsald.
 þer helpe fro hym þei wold not hyde,
 bot hertly hetes with hym to hold,
 so þat he had to tell þat tyde
 IIII thowsand, þat ware knytes cald.
 In þis tyme Absolon
 had geydder d grett plente
 Of knyghtes þat cough þeron 8795
 his fader bayn to be.

S 731. 4 wylbe / — **733.** 7 tell in / 11 For cough see Kalén, p. CLXIV.

L 731. 1 Wyrkes nowe / be / wysdome / 2 that King / 3 How / have / some /
 4 Wot / Wolle / fayne forthy / 5 byddes / beyond the flome / 6 awne / 7 Absalon /
 sonne shal / 8 agayns / grete company / 9 Lettirs belyve they / 10 this sonde /
 theire / 11 Wismen / Werly / 12 knawes ych / — **732.** 1 When / herd thes *lettres*
 red / 2 wele comforthed / Was / 3 fforth / the flume / 4 manaim / grete Cite / 5
 The / that / that stede was / 6 welcomed / mych gle / 7 their belde / they / 8
 abyde Wer / so omitted / Wold / 9 That Cite / full wele / 10 there myght noo /
 it / 11 they doubted noo / 12 gonne / such engine / — **733.** 1 Kyng / there /
 blys gun abyde / 2 will What / wold / 3 ffour barounes wonned ther nere besyde
 / 4 that sent / Vitells / vnsold / 5 Their / they will / 6 hetys With / hald / 7
 So that / in omitted / that / 8 foure thowsand that wer knyghtes cald / In this tyme
 in lower margin / 9 fol. 159 a / Regum secundo in upper margin / this / Absalon
 / 10 gedered grete plente / 11 knyghtes that covth theron / 12 fadre bayne.

- 734 þei rested nawder day ne nyȝt
 to þei þe flum ware passed playn.
 8800 when þe had of þat Cyte a syȝt,
 whore Dauid wuned, þen ware þei fayn.
 bot he wyst wele þei had no myȝt
 to towch hym, bot yf it wer *with* trayn.
 þerfor his men arays he ryȝt
 þem forto mare *with* all his mayn.
 8805 A p[er]te to hym self toke he
 and vnto Ioab an oþer,
 And the thryd he had suld be
 to abysay, Ioab broþer.
- 735 full fayn he wold *with* þem haue went,
 8810 bot some þei sayd hym þis myscheffe,
 »yf þou ware in þer handes hent,
 þen had þ[e]i gam vs all to greue.
 And ser, yf sum of vs be shent,
 þe remland þen may þou releue.
 8815 þerfor yt is not our assent
 þat þou owt of þis Cyte meue.»
 he thanked þem oft sythis
 þat shewed þer luf so large.
 bot he sayd, »lordynges, lythes!
 8820 of A thyng I yow charge.
- 736 yf grace fall, when ȝe haue be gun,
 þat ȝe þe vycory may geyte,
 loke ȝe saue Absolon my sun
 þat he be nawder bun ne bette.»
 8825 þei say, »and he in feld be fun,
 we sall full dewly do our dette.
 he sal be in no bandes bun.»
 I hope þei held all þat þei hette.
 Ioab *with* cumpany
 8830 os principall furth past.
 his broþer Abysay
 folod on full fast.

They quickly crossed the river and were delighted to see the city where David was staying. David arrayed his men in three parts: one under himself, one under Joab, and one under Abishai, Joab's brother.

David would have liked to go with them. But they advised him not to risk falling into the enemy's hands, since this would be disastrous to them all. He thanked them for their love but charged them,

if they should be victorious, to deal gently with Absalom. They promised him that. Joab with his company went first, followed by his brother Abishai.

S 735. 9 Cf. L sith: lith, where lith may be taken as adj. 'gentle'. As regards imperative forms, Kalén, p. CXLV, has examples of the plural ending -(e)s within the line only, not in rime-words. Cf. also *ibid.*, p. LXXXIII and p. CLVII — 736. 7 salbe / 8 all above the line / 9 with his / 10 furth he.

L 734. 1 They / navther / nyght / 2 to that the flume they were / playne / 3 When they / that Cite sight / 4 wher / wonned then wer they fayne / 5 Bot / they / noo myght / 6 touch / if / trayne / 7 Therfor / arrays / ryght / 8 theym / mar / mayne / Ca. xviiij in right margin / 9 parte / selfe tuke / 10 to / othre / 11 thirrd / shuld / 12 Abysay / brothre — 735. 1 Full / theym have / 2 they / this myscheve / 3 If thou wer / their / 4 then / they / all vs / greve / 5 if / 6 the remaunt then / thou releve / 7 Therfor it / noight / 8 that thou / oute inserted above the line / this Cite meve / 9 He / them / sith / 10 that / their lufe / 11 Bot / lith / 12 oon thing I you — 736. 1 If / ye have begonne / 2 that ye the Victory / get / 3 Luke ye save Absalon / sonne / 4 that / navthre bonne / bet / 5 They / felde / fonne / 6 shal ful dvly doo / det / 7 He shuld in noo banles be bonne / 8 they / that they het / 9 his omitted / company / 10 as / he omitted / 11 His brothre Abisay / 12 folowed after.

On the other side came Absalom with his men, among whom was also Hushai, David's friend. There was no quarter given. When David's men had slain twenty thousand, the rest were glad to get away alive.

- 737 Absolon on þat oþer syd
 come with his folke, fell os þe fend.
 And with þem was arayd to ryde 8835
 Cusy, þat was kynges Dauid frend.
 þen was no bote to [byd a]byde,
 bot ylkon shope oþer to shend.
 Of all þer tolyng in þat tyd
 ware lang to tell bot loke þe ende. 8840
 when Dauid men had slayn
 XX milia and moo,
 The remland ware full fayn fol. 83 a
 with lyfes þer way to go.

Absalom took refuge in a wood. His hair caught in a tree and his horse went away, so that he was left hanging there. But nobody dared to hurt him for fear of King David,

- 738 Absolon, when he saw þat syȝt 8845
 how þat his folke ware fayn to flee,
 Into a wod he rydes ryȝt;
 þor trowd he best bel[d]yd to be.
 þe wynd heyued vp his hare on hyȝt
 so þat yt cached in to a tre. 8850
 his sted went furth his way full wyȝt,
 and by the hare so hang he.
 ffolke fowled hym to f[e]re
 and fand hym in þe fyrth.
 bot non durst do hym no dere 8855
 for dred of kyng Dauid.

not even when Joab offered a reward of fifty shillings. Then Joab himself thrust him through. That was the end of Absalom because of his misconduct and wicked living.

- 739 when Ioab herd tell þis tythyng
 how Absolon hang by þe hare,
 he bede a boy fyfty schylyng
 to sla hym, or he farre fare. 8860
 bot no man durst do swylke a thyng
 for Dauid dred, als I sayd ayre.
 þen Ioab toyȝt yt hard hethyng
 and thurgh þe body þer hym bare.
 þus had þis man myschaunce 8865
 and for non oþer thyng
 bot for myse gouernance
 and vnlefull lyfyng.

S 738. 6 atre / 9 fare / 10 fyrth as incongruous rime-word may be explained by metathesis; cf. Kalén, p. CXXXIII / — 739. 1 th cancelled after þis / 3 body instead of boy.

L 737. 1 Absalon / that oþre syde / 2 as the fende / 3 them / arrayd / 4 Chusy that / kinges / frende / 5 Then / noo boyte to bid abyde / 6 ychoone / oþre / shende / 7 their dooyng / that tyde / 8 wer long / luke the / 9 When / slayne / 10 twenty thovsant / 11 remanaunt was / fayne / 12 With lifes their ways / goo / — 738. 1 Absalon / that sight / 2 that / folk wer fayne / fle / 3 rydes full right / 4 there he trowd / belded / 5 The wynde evyd / here / hight / 6 that it / vnto a tre / 7 His stede / wight / 8 here there henced / 9 folowed / fere / 10 that firth / 11 Bot noon / doo / no omitted / 12 drede / king / — 739. 1 When / this titthing / 2 Absalon / the here / 3 He proferd / boy / shilling / 4 sloo / him inserted above the line / farrere past / 5 Bot nooman / doo such / thing / 6 drede as / ere / 7 Then / thought it / hething / 8 thurgh the / there he hym thrast / 9 Thus hade absalon / 10 noon oþre thing / Absalon interfectus est in right margin / 11 Bot / mysgouernance / 12 vnlefull liffyng.

- 740 Sone Ioab herkynd *and* beheld
 8870 all his enmys away wore gone.
 To geydder his men agayn to beld
 bugyls gart he blaw gud wone.
 Vnto his hand all con þei held.
 þat body down þen haue þei toyn
 8875 And beyred yt fayre in the feld
and mad a hyll of mony a ston.
 þus ended Absolon;
 so dyd archytofell,
 And hedyd was Amon
 8880 for Thamar, so we tell.
- 741 when þis batell was done ylk dele,
 Ioab sent sone a messynger:
 Cusy, þat lufed Kyng Daudid well,
 was full mery to mend his chere.
 8885 he told [hym] all fro hed to hele
 how þat pies folke ware hal[e] in fere.
 þe kyng sayd, »say me for my sele,
 ys my sun hole? þat wold I here.»
 he sayd, »ser, I wald byd
 8890 þine enmys be tyd ylkon,
 Als þi sun is be tyd.»
 þen wyst he þat he was sloyn.
- 742 he syghyd sore and sayd, »alas,
 In werld is none so wyll of rede.
 8895 þe wurthest wyȝt þat euer was
 þis day *with* dole is done to ded.
 fol. 83 b wold god þat I *with* payn myȝt pase
and to be styked þor *in* his stede.
 who so my sun dyssayued hath
 8900 sall dere aby [that doylefull d]jede.»
 he drowped day *and* nyȝt
with sorow sore *and* sad.
 No myrth amend [hym] myȝt;
 so wex he mased *and* made.

When Joab saw that all his enemies were gone, he gathered his men again by blowing the bugles. They buried Absalom and made a hill of stones upon him. Thus ended Absalom like Ahithophel and Amnon.

Joab sent a messenger to King David. The king asked whether his son was safe, and was told about Absalom's death.

David lamented bitterly over Absalom: »Would to God that I might die a painful death and be stabbed there in his stead! The slayer of Absalom should atone dearly for his crime. Nothing could relieve the king's grief.

S 741. 6 half / — 742. 8 with byttur bede / 11 his.

L 740. 1 herkened / behelde / 2 were goone / 3 gedre / agayne / belde / 4 bugylls made / goode woone / 5 gun they helde / 6 Absalon body / þen omitted / have they taken / 7 beried it fare / felde / 8 made ane hill / many / stooone / 9 Thus / Absalon / 10 did Achitofell — 741. 1 When this / doone ychdele / 2 messenger / 3 that / king / wele / 4 glad / amend / 5 fol. 159 b / He / hym all / heved / 6 that his / were hoal / 7 The king / tell / 8 is / sonne hoal that / 9 He / wold / 10 thyn Enmys betyd euerychoone / 11 As thy sonne / betyd / 12 then / that / slayne — 742. 1 He syghed full sore / allas / 2 world / noon / will / 3 The Worthiest wight that / 4 this / doyle / doon / deid / 5 Wold / that / payne might pas / 6 slayne there / 7 Who / sonne dissaved has / 8 shal dere aby that doylefull dede / 9 He mourned / nyght / 11 Noo / hym myght / 12 waxt / mad.

Joab and Abishai expected to be welcomed with great honour, but David was constantly drooping. Then the people began to say to each other, »He shall not be our king».

- 743 Duke Ioab *and* abysay, 8905
 when god to þem þis grace had sent,
 went home *with* ryall cumpany,
and wele þei trawed in þer entent
 fforto be welcumd worthyly
 sen þei for þe kynges wrschep went. 8910
 bot euer he drowped *and* was drery,
and for þei wyst not what he ment,
 þei ware full euyll apayd;
and be cawse of þis tythyng
 ylkon tyll oþer sayd, 8915
 »he sall not be our kyng.»

Then Joab advised David to cease his mourning and go to his people, showing them his friendship. Otherwise everybody would turn away from him. David followed his counsel.

- 744 when Ioab wyst, he was full wo;
 be lyfe wentt whore þe kyng lendes.
 »ser kyng», he says, »why dose þou so?
 þi self full shamely þou shendes. 8920
 had þou leuer þe lyf of þi foo
 þen þe frenschep of all þi frendes?
 Bot yf þou gladly to þem go,
 all þis folk fast fro þe wendes.
 lett þi kyndnese be kyd 8925
and make mery chere.»
 Att his counsell he dyde;
 so ware all fayn in fere.

Abiathar and Zadoch made arrangements for a worthy reception of David. The tribe of Judah, who had first made him king in their country, went first out to bring him to his own city.

- 745 þe gud byschop abythiar
and sadoch, þat wytty prest be name, 8930
 þei ordand clerkes þat [with] þem ware
 þe arke of god to kepe fro blame
 And also wysmen, non wold þem mare,
 to kepe þer kyng when he comys hame.
 þe kyn[red] of Iuda furth con fare; 8935
 þei war þe fyrst soght to þat same.
 ff[or] þei fyrst made hym kyng
 at home in þer cuntre,
 þei went [fyrst] furth to bryng
 hym to his awn [cite]. 8940

S 744. 4 shamesly / — 745. 7 kyng / 9 ffro / 11 furth above fyr cancelled / 12 cuntre.

L 743. 1 Abisay / 2 this grace to theym / 3 Went / with a riall / 4 they trowed / theirre / 5 welcomed worthely / 6 sith they / the kinges worshyp / 7 Bot / sorowed / 8 they / 9 They were / euyll / 10 and because of this thing / 11 Ychoon to othre / 12 shal / oure king / — 744. 1 Ca. xix / When / hym / woo / 2 belyve he lukes where the king / 3 Ser king / doos thou soo / 4 thy / shamely here thou / 5 Has thou lever the lif / thy / 6 than the frenship / thy / 7 if thou / theym goo / 8 thy folke / the / 9 Let thy kyndnes / 10 make theym mery / 11 At / counsell / did / 12 then were / fayne / — 745. 1 The goode bishop Abiathare / 2 Sadoch that was prest by name / 3 And othre clerkes that with theym were / 4 the / 5 They ordand in all that they dar / 6 the king / come home / 7 The kynred / gun fair / 8 they were the first / that / 9 ffor they first / king / 10 their contre / 11 They went first forto bring / 12 Cite.

- 746 Vnto the flom haue þei soyðt,
 þ[ou]sandes mo þen neyn or ten.
 A bryg full wysly haue þei wroyt
 for Kyng Dauid *and* all his men.
 8945 ffurth ouer þe flode þei haue hym broyðt,
and for þer kyng all þei hym kene.
 þei þat be fore fauerd hym noyðt
 ware all full fayn to folow hym þen.
 8950 þe kynred of Iuda
 ware next in cumpany.
 þerfor full mony ma
 ware greued *with* grett enuy.

A bridge was built across the river for David and his men. He was now acknowledged as king by all, even by those who had not favoured him earlier. The tribe of Judah, who came next after the king, were envied by many.

- 747 Dukes, erlys *and* knythys kene,
 þat went *with* Absolon, his sun,
 8955 when þat þei wyst *withoutyn* wene
 kyng Dauid suld in we[l]this wun,
 Vnto hym þen þei come clene
and bed in bandes to be bun
 8960 And mendes make, als he wold meyne,
 for greuans þat þei had be gun.
 he for gaf all þer gylt,
 when þat þei mercy craued.
 ol. 84 a he wold þat non ware spylt
 þat wold þem self be sayued.

Absalom's followers came to David to make amends and he forgave them.

- 8965 748 So als þei ryde rychly arayd,
 sodanly þat man þei mett,
 Semey, þat had hym myssayd
and stoned *with* stonys in þe strette.
 he knelyd on knese *and* mercy prayd,
 8970 *and* his frendes fell be fore þer fette.
 Ioab wold full fayn haue hym aflayd,
 bot þe kyng sayd, »hele I hym hete.
 Sen god forgyfes vs tyll
and rychly vs releues,
 8975 So sall we *with* gud wyll
 for gyf þem þat vs greues.»

Shimei, who had earlier reviled David, suddenly arrived and prayed for mercy. Joab was unwilling, but the king said that we should forgive our enemies as God forgives us.

S 746. In *S* stanzas 746 and 747 have been transposed. The present stanza consequently follows after 747 in fol. 84 a | 2 þer sandes | — **747.** See note to *S* 746 | — **748.** 6 on þer | 9 vntyll *with* vn cancelled.

L 746. 1 Unto | flume syde have they soght | 2 thowsandes moo than nyen | 3 brigge | wysely have they wroght | 4 king | 5 that floode they have him broght | 6 their king they hym ken | 7 They that before favored him noght | 8 wer | fayne | then | 9 The | 10 were | company | 11 Therfor | many moo | 12 were greved | grete envy | — **747.** 1 and Erles | knyghtes | 2 that | Absalon | sonne | 3 When that they Wist outhen | 4 king | shuld | welth wonne | 5 then they | all clene | 6 bed them | bonne | 7 amendes | as | mene | 8 for the grevance that they | begonne | 9 He forgave | theire | 10 that they | graved | 11 He | that noon were spilt | 12 that | them | saved | — **748.** 1 as they | full richely arayd | 2 that | they mete | 3 that | 4 stunt | stoones | that strete | 5 He kneled | knees | 6 before theire fete | 7 full fayne wold have him flayd | 8 the king | heale | him | 9 Sith | forgyves | vntyll | 10 richely | releves | 11 shal | goode | 12 forgyve theym that | greves.

Then they met Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan. He was poorly dressed and untidy. The king asked him if anybody had ruined his happiness. He answered that he had lost every-

- 749 furth in þer pase, als þei con passe,
 sone Mifbosett hath þei mett.
 he was þe sun of Ionatas,
 þat David lufed deuly be dett. 8980
 In byyll wede arayd he was
and all his face with hare vmsett.
 þe kyng sone hym resond has
 yf any lede his lykyng lett:
 »þou hath catell *and* corne 8985
 vnto þi bedyng broyzt.»
 he sayd, »lord, all ys lorn
and me ys leued ryzt noyzt.

his steward Ziba having taken his lordship from him. Then the king said it should be divided between them. But Mephibosheth wanted to leave it all to Ziba and follow the king.

- 750 lord, my steward, *ser* Cyba,
 þou toke to me, [as man] most wyse; 8990
 My lordschep hath he tane me fra,
 ay redy agayns me to ryse.»
 þe kyng sayd, »sen I see yt sa
 þat he hath wun lordschep with lyy[s]e,
 yt sal be perted be twyx yow two 8995
 to tyme þat we may vs a vyse.»
 On knese þen con he fall
and sayd, »so wyll not [h]e.
 gud lord, lett hym haue all,
 I wyll wende with þe.» 9000

Then they went on to Jerusalem, and David was restored to his royal dignity. The people of Judah were always foremost in supporting him. Now his grief was cured.

- 751 So went þei furth withoutyn more,
 all þat ware to his bydyng bown,
 To ierusalem, *and* when þei come þore,
 þei rayسد hym vp with grett renown.
 In his astate con þei hym restore
 to reyn os ryall kyng with crown. fol. 84 b 9005
 ffolke of Iuda ware euer be fore
 to forther hym in feld *and* town.
 his wo was waryschyd þen
and end mad of all, 9010
 As þe prophett Natan
 sayd þat yt suld be fall.

S 749. 7 -i blotted out after þe / — 750. 2 man as / 6 lyffe / 7 salbe / 10 t of not above o / be / — 751. 3 Sign of separation between come and þore / 4 with inserted above the line.

L 749. 1 fol. 160 a / *Regum secundo* in upper margin / Furth in their paysse all thei gun pas / 2 Myfibosett have they met / 3 He was the sonne / Ionathas / 4 that / dvely / det / 5 feble wedys arrayd / 6 here vmset / 7 The king / him asked / 8 if / likyng lett / 9 Thou has / 10 thy bidding broght / 11 He said lorde / his lorne / 12 and to me is levyd right nought / — 750. 1 Lord / steward / Siba / 2 that thou gave me as man / 3 lordship has taken me fro / 4 agayne / 5 The king / sith / it so / 6 that / has all the lordship on this wyse / 7 It shal / parted be twix you two / 8 to after that / avyse / 9 knees then gun / 10 wolle / he / 11 Goode lorde let / have / 12 and I wolle / the / — 751. 1 they / withouten / 2 þat omitted / were / byddyng bowne / 3 Ierusalem / they / there / 4 they / grette renowne / 5 gun they / 6 reigne full royally king / crowne / 7 were / before / 8 forthre / felde / towne / 9 His woo / waryst / then / 10 endyng / 11 the prophet Nathan / 12 sayd it shuld befall.

- 752 Vnto þe tempyll þen con he fare;
grett sacrafyce þei haue be gun.
9015 Prestes *and* clerkes, þat þen ware þore,
þei ware full fayn þat he was fun.
his ten wyfes, þat I told of ayre,
ordand he wrschypfully to wun.
9020 Bot with þem wold he mell no mare
by cause of Absolon his sun.
þus was he gettyn agayn
and sesyd in his kyngdom.
his frendes ware ferly fayn,
bot enmys had he sum.
- 9025 753 Syr Cyba, þat I of ayre sayd,
was lord of Mysbosett land.
ffull ryally he hym arayd
and full grett felnes fu[r]th he fand.
A grett geydderyng sone hath he grayd
9030 of ebrews, þat he had at hand.
And felous poyntes hath he purvayd
þat Dauid in strengh suld not stand.
»was he not gesse sun
and of bedlem bredyng?
9035 whore has his fader fun
þat he suld be kyng?
- 754 Sat he not als a sympyll page
on feld to fede his fader fee?
And aftur when he come of age
9040 cayred abowt in sere cuntree?
And sythyn in were for his wage
wrogh mekyll [woo], þis wele wott we.
yf yt suld go by herytage,
þen am I neghbour nere þen hee.
9045 þerfor I wold we wentt
his forse sone fort[o] shend.»
þei sayd all, »[we] assent
euy n as þou wyll to wende.»

In the temple a great sacrifice was offered. David provided generously for his ten wives but would have no more to do with them. Thus was he reinstated in his kingdom to the delight of his friends. But he had enemies too.

Ziba (Sheba) was planning to overthrow David: «Was he not the son of Jesse, born in Bethlehem?»

When it came to hereditary rights, Ziba considered himself much nearer to the throne. Therefore, he said, they should go and destroy David's army. Everybody agreed.

S 753. 1 *The A. V., ch. 20: »Sheba, the son of Bichri.»* — **754.** 11 *with.*

L 752. 1 Unto the temple then gun / 2 grete sacrifice they have begonne / 3 that then wer there / 4 they were / fayne that / fonne / 5 His / wyves that / ere / 6 worshiply / wonne / 7 theym / noo more / 8 because / Absalon / sonne / 9 Thus Was / getyn agayne / 10 ceased / kingdome / 11 His / were farly fayne / 12 Enmys / sume / — **753.** 1 Sir Siba that I here of sayd / 2 lorde / Mifiboset / Ca. xx. Hic nota de Siba *in right margin* / 3 rially / arrayd / 4 and furth full grete felons / 5 grete gederynd / has / he omitted / 6 Ebrews that / 7 he has / 8 that / strenght shuld / 9 Was / Jesse sonne / 10 Bethleem / 11 Where / his inserted above the line / fadre fonne / 12 that his sonne shuld / — **754.** 1 as / simple / 2 felde / fadre / 3 after / to age / 4 caired aboute / 5 sith / werre / 6 wroght mych woo this / wot ye / 7 If it shuld / be heritage / 8 then / neghtbure nare than he / 9 Therefore / went / 10 force / forto shende / 11 They / we assent / 12 even / thou wolle.

David ordered his cousin Amasa to go to their friends, the tribe of Judah, and tell them about Ziba's evil intentions.

- 755 Kyng Dauid herd tell tythyng þen
 how Cyba soght to do hym dere, 9050
 And all on what wyse he be gan
 to gedder folke hym forto fere.
 he cald his cosyn Amasan,
 A Duke þat was full wyse of were.
 »Wende furth,» he sayd, »full wele þou can, 9055
 to þe folke þat *our* frendes ere,
 þe kynred of Iuda,
 þat euer wyll vs releue,
 And say þem how Cyba fol. 85 a
 ys ordand vs to greue. 9060

But he was to be back within three days. Amasa wasted no time, but hurried away to find men that were David's friends. But when three days were past, he had not come back.

- 756 Bot loke þou be by thre days end
 with all þi men at me agayn
 þat þou þen with my men may wende
 to mare þat traytur of his trayn.» 9065
 Amasan wold no lenger [1]end;
 he soygt on ylk syd *certayn*
 folke þat he wyst was Dauid frend;
 to fech þem furth he was full fayn.
 In all þat euer he moght
 þat space he sped *and* spend, 9070
 bot Agayn com he noght
 when thre days was ende.

The king grew uneasy and told Joab to go with his knights against Ziba. When he met Amasa, they should join forces. Joab started straight away.

- 757 The kyng toogh he dweltt full lang
 and dowl Cyba suld þem schame.
 he bad Ioab, his stewerd strang, 9075
 take þe knyghtes he had at hame
 Agayn Cyba fast forto gang:
 »Duke amasan, he dose þe same.
 when ze ar mett *your* men amang,
 gos both to geydder in goddes name!» 9080
 Duke Ioab sone was dygt
 in all þat he mygt hy,
 And furth he rydes full rygt
 with full clene cumpany.

S 756. 5 wend / 7 And folke / 8 fayn *above the line.*

L 755. 1 tithing then / 2 Siba / doo / 3 began / 4 gedre / to / 5 He called / Cosyn amasan / 6 a duke that / werre / 7 thou / 8 the / that / er / 9 The kinred / 10 that / wolle / releve / 11 theym / Siba / 12 is / greve / — 756. 1 luke thou / be / 2 thy / agayne / 3 That thou then / wend / 4 mar that traitur / trayne / 5 noo / lende / 6 soght / ych a side *certayne* / 7 And *omitted* / ifolke that / wist / frende / 8 bring theym / fayne / 9 fol. 160 b / that / myght / 10 that / 11 Bot agayne come / 12 the thre / were end / — 757. 1 king thocht that he dwelt / 2 dowed Siba shuld do theym shame / 3 He / steward / 4 the knyghtes that he / home / 5 Agayne Siba / to / 6 duke Amasan doos the / 7 When ye / met youre / 8 goos / gedre / godes / 9 dight / 10 that / myght / 11 rides / right / 12 a clene company.

- 9085 758 So in his way, as he was sett,
 Duke Amasan sone can he see
with full fayr folke þat he had fett
and samned owt of sere cuntre.
 he toyȝt, »bot I þis lordschep lett
 9090 þe kyng sall prays hym more þen me.»
 þerfor he menys, when þei ar mett,
with sum debate his bane to be.
 Duke amasan lyght down
 to com his [cosyn] vntyll.
 9095 Duke Ioab mad hym bown
 his falsched to fulfyll.

When Joab saw Amasa, he decided to kill this dangerous rival for the king's favour. When Amasa dismounted to meet him, Joab prepared to carry out his treachery.

- 759 In A fayr medew con þei mete.
 Ioab fard all *with faygyng fare.*
 his sword owt of his sheth he lete,
 9100 ryȝt os [yt] noyȝt his wytyng ware.
 To Amasan spake he wordes swete,
and com als he suld kyse hym þare.
 he toke þe sword vp at his fette,
and througþ þe body so he hym bare.
 9105 Two dughty Dukes of dede
 so had he murtherd þan,
 And all for erthly mede,
 Abnar *and* [A]masan.

They met in a fair meadow, and Joab's manner was insinuating. Then he dropped his sword as if unawares. Pretending to kiss Amasa he took it up and smote him. He had now for worldly gain murdered two gallant dukes, Abner and Amasa.

- 760 when folke fand þis felous thyng,
 9110 þei weped *and* had full mekyll wo.
 Duke Ioab fenyd a fals lesyng
and bad þei suld not sorow so:
 fol. 85 b »he was traytur vnto þe kyng;
 [and] I was sent hym forto sloo.
 9115 To beryall lett [his] men hym bryng,
and hast we fast to fell our foo.»
 he gart a man of his
 hyde þe cors owt of þe way,
 So þat men suld hym myse
 9120 *and* make no more Daray.

Joab told the people not to sorrow, Amasa having been a traitor to the king. Let his men bury him! The dead body was removed so as not to cause trouble.

S 758. 10 counsell / — **759.** 10 musche cancelled before murtherd.

L 758. 1 set / 2 duke / gun / 3 With / faire / that / fet / 4 sammed oute / 5 He thought / his lordship let / 6 the king shal prayse / than / 7 Therfore / menes / they / met / 8 bayne / 9 Amasan lighted downe / 10 come / Cosyn / 11 made / bowne / 12 falsed / fullfyll / — **759.** 1 a faire medow gun they / 2 spake with fageyng / 3 His swerd oute / the / 4 right as it not / wityng were / 5 sayd / 6 come as / shuld kys / there / 7 He tuke the swerd / fete / 8 and omitted / thurgh the / so omitted / he gun hym bere / 9 Twoo doughty dukes / 10 had he so murdered then / 12 Abner / Amasan — **760.** 1 When the / fond this / thing / 2 they / ful mych woo / 3 fened / lesing / 4 they shuld / 5 He / tratour / oure / 6 and I / him / 7 let his men / bring / 8 haste / oure / 9 He mad / 10 hide the / oute / the / 11 that / shuld him mys / 12 noo / delay.

They went on to seek Ziba in towns and cities everywhere. He had taken refuge in a city called Abel, where he felt safe because it was so well fortified. Joab laid siege to it.

- 761 So went þei furth to seke Cyba
and with þer forse to fell his pryð.
 þei soght in townes to *and* fra
and in Cytys on ylka syde.
 In A Cyte, þat heygh Abelay, 9125
 þore had he beld hym to abyð.
 ffor yt was wardyd *and* wallyd swa,
 þei dred no tene þat myȝt be tyde.
 Ioab *and* his meneȝe
 to wyn yt ware in no dowt. 9130
 þei seged þat Cete
with bold men all abowt.

The people inside were short of food. Then a lady from the city boldly went up on to the wall and upbraided Joab, saying that he, whose duty it was to protect the people, was now preparing to destroy them.

- 762 þei sett a sawtt *with* gunys gud,
with bowes *and* *with* Alablawsters blend.
 þe fo[l]k *within* sone faled fode 9135
and had no forse þem to dyffend.
 A lady þat was myld of mode
 þore in þat same Cyte con lend.
 Apon þe walles ȝeply scho ȝode
and carped to Ioab, þat scho kend: 9140
 »S[er], þou suld *with* reson
 the kynges folke fend fro noe,
 And here þou makes þe bown
 with strengþ þem to dystroye.

Joab listened to her and answered that he would be content with having Ziba handed over. The lady thought it less disastrous to lose one than all.

- 763 ffor to dere þies here [þou] dwelles 9145
 þat suld maynteyn [þeym] mor[n]e *and*
 [no]ne.»
 Ioab takes tent how scho hym tellys,
and to hyr þus says he sone,
 »Ma Dame, to mare yow no man mellys.
 þis is our wyll *with* wordes foyne: 9150
 fforto noy Cyba *and* non ellys.
 deliuer hym vs, þen haue we done.»
 þat lady wysly wroyȝt;
 scho saw qwat suld be fall.
 weyle lese perell hyr toyȝt 9155
 [to lose oon] þen all.

S 762. 9 Som / — 763. 1 þat here / 2 myne / 6 foyne: see 728: 7 / 12 losso on.

L 761. 1 they / Siba / 2 their force / pride / 3 They / townnes / fro / 4 Cites / ych a / 5 a Cite that hight Abela / 6 there / belded / abyde / 7 For it / warded / walled so / 8 they / noo thing that myght betyde / 9 menyte / 10 it were not in doute / 11 Thei / that Cite / 12 aboute / — 762. Thei set sawtes / gonne goode / 2 ablasters blende / 3 The folke / fayled foode / 4 noo force theym / defende / 5 that / mylde / moode / 6 there / that / Cite gun lende / 7 Vpon the / iapely she yood / 8 said / that she kende / 9 Ser thou shuld / 10 kinges / defende / noye / / 11 thou / the bowne / 12 theym / dystroye / — 763. 1 Forto disease theym here thou / 2 that shuld mayntene theym morne / none / 3 she / telles / 4 vnto hire thus / 5 Madame / mar you noman melles / 6 this / will / fone / 7 noye Siba / noon elles / 8 vs hym then have / doone / 9 That / wroght / 10 she / what shuld / 11 Wele les / she thought / 12 to lose oon than theym all.

764 A Commyn *consell* cald scho tyte
and told þem holy as scho ment,
 And how Cyba was worthy to wyte
 9160 of all the harme þei had þore [hent].
 Smertly þei gart his hed of smytt,
and [vn]to Ioab þei yt sent.
 hee remeued þen with owt respytt,
and to ierusalem sone he went.
 9165 þe kynred of Iuda,
 þat were ay frend[es] of old,
 9160 a went whore þei com fro
and wrogh what euer þei wold.

She called a common council and told them that Ziba was responsible for all their sufferings. They smote off his head and sent it to Joab, who then returned to Jerusalem. The people of Judah also went home.

765 Now is kyng Dauid broyzt to rest
 9170 *and* rewlys his reme with ryalte.
 he ordand all thyng at þe best,
 os gud *consell* bad yt suld be.
 ffor hym *and* his court he kest
 gud *seruytours* semly to see
 9175 And [for] his land by est *and* west
 gud *gouerners* in sere degree.
 All folke ware fayn to plese
and heyld vnto his hand.
 Bot sone [fell sodan] dysese
 9180 ouer all in his land.

Now David could rule his kingdom in peace. He put everything in the best order according to good counsel, appointing good servants and governors of various ranks. But suddenly there came a calamity over the land.

766 Brede *and* wyn both wex so dere
 þat sympyll men myzt no socur gete.
 þe pure *perysched* fare *and* nere
 both for defawt of drynke *and* mete.
 9185 þe kyng of god oft con inquire
 þe cause of all þat hungur grete.
 Natan þe prophett con apere
and sayd for for faders forfett,
 »þe gud Duke Iosue
 9190 heyght *and* ensured þer on
 þat peyse suld holdyn be
 with þe folke of Gabaon.

Poor people perished for want of food and drink. The king often inquired of God about the cause of the famine. Nathan the prophet said that peace should be kept with the Gibeonites.

S 764. 2 þem *above* scho cancelled / 4 þat þei — 765. 7 furth / 11 sodanly fell / — 766. 3 pr cancelled *before* pure.

L 764. 1 comon counsell / she / 2 theym holly how she / 3 Siba / 4 þat omitted / they there had hent / 5 fol. 161 a / Regum secundo *in upper margin* / they made / hede / smyte / 6 vnto / they it / 7 He remeued then / oute respyte / 8 fast they / 9 The / 10 that / frendes / olde / 11 Went where they come / 12 wroght / they / — 765. 1 king / broght / 2 revoles / Reaume / royalte / 3 He / thinges / the / 4 as goode counsell / shuld / 5 courte / 6 goode *servatours* semly / 7 for / este / 8 goode *gouernours* / degre / 9 were fayne / please / 10 held vnto / 11 sodan disesse / 12 fell ouer / Ca. xxj *in right margin* / — 766. 1 wyne / waxt / 2 that simple / myght / 3 The pover parest far / 4 defaute / drynk / 5 The king / gun enquire / 6 the / the hunger / 7 Nathan the prophet gun appere / 8 said / fourme faders forfete / 9 The goode duke / 10 hight / theron / 11 That peace shuld halden / 12 the.

Though Philistines, they had been defended by him as if they had been Hebrews. But Saul had broken the treaty; therefore the famine had come. And it would not cease until amends were made.

- 767 ffor he ensured þem on swylke wyse,
all ware þei folke phylisteyn.
he fended þem from þer enmys,
euyn als þei Ebrews had beyne. 9195
he sayd no man suld þem surpryse
agayns þe trews tan þem be twen.
Kyng saul sauyd not þat assyse;
þerfor now comys þe hungur keyne. 9200
And *ser*, it sall not sesse
bot rayke about be ryȝt
Tyll þei be sett in pese
and mendes þerfor be dyȝt.»

David sent for the Gibeonites and asked them what vengeance they craved for the wrongs they had suffered.

- 768 Kyng Daudid, when [he] herd of þis,
sent fast for þe folke of Gabaon 9205
And sayd, »*sers*, I wyll mend all myse
þat ȝe wyll rekyn by reson.» —
»Syr Iosue heyght for hym and his
to send vs pese in all seson, 9210
And kyng saul, þe sun of Cys,
with his batels he bare vs down.
þat was noyȝt lafull thyng;
þerfor vengeance we craue.
þerto answers þe kyng, 9215
»what vengeance wold ȝe haue?»

They wanted all of Saul's descendants handed over to them. This was done. The people, who were in a furious mood, immediately killed them. Then they returned home and the famine ceased.

- 769 þei say, »vs nedes noyȝt of þi gud,
ne of þi catell kepe we none.
Bot þat ar born of saul blod,
delyuer vs þem ylkon.» 9220
when kyng Daudid þis vnderstud,
þei soyght *and* sone gate gud wone.
þe folke, þat were in wyll full wode, fol. 86 b
sessy[d] noyȝt tyll þei were sloyn.
þer cause þen þei relessed 9225
and hyed þem home agayn.
And so þe hungur sessyd,
and þen þe folke ware fayn.

S 767. 2 *Cf.* 598:10 | — **768.** 6 reson cancelled before seson | — **769.** 7 liber ius Regum in upper margin | þei folke | 8 sessyn.

L 767. 1 For | ensured them | such | 2 all though they were | philistien | 3 He defended them fro their | 4 even as they | bene | 5 He said noo men shuld them opprisse | 6 agaynes the | taken them betwene | 7 King Saul saved | that | 8 therefore comes now this hunger kene | 9 shal | cesse | 10 goo aboute by right | 11 To they | set | peace | 12 amendes therfore | dyght | — **768.** 1 he herd | this | 2 fore the folk | 3 said *seris* | wolle amend | mys | 4 that ye wolle | reason | 5 *Ser* | hight | 6 save | peace | season | 7 king Saul the sonne | 8 downe | 9 That | not lawfull thing | 10 therfore vengeaunce | crave | 11 Therto | the king | 12 vengeaunce | ye have | — **769.** 1 They | noht | thi goode | 2 thi | noone | 3 that | borne | Saul bloode | 4 deliuer | them euerychoone | 5 When king | this vndre stooode | 6 they soght | they fand good woone | 7 Tho | that | will | woode | 8 cessed noht or they | slayne | 9 Their | then they relesed | 10 hied them | agayne | 11 the hunger cessed | 12 þen omitted | the | were full fayne.

770 þen in þe bybyll may men see
 9230 þe kyng was oft in careys kest.
 And sythyn when he had playn pawste
and all his perels war ouer past,
 D[i]ligam te, domine,
 þis salme he sett *and* sayd yt fast.
 9235 þat menes: lord, I sall luf þe
 lelly whyls my lyf may last.
 with swylke prayers of price
 he honerde god euer more
 And with sere sacrafyce,
 9240 os costom was þen þore.

When David had come into full power and his perils were over, he wrote and often read this psalm: Diligam te, domine. He also sacrificed, as was the custom there.

771 Bot afturward he dyd a dede
 þat was full grett for goddes aw:
 To nowmber, when he had [no] nede,
 þe folke of god agayns his law.
 9245 ffor moyses told, yf he toke hede,
 þat no man suld þe nowmber know
 Of goddes folke for dowl *and* drede
 þat god suld vengeance schaw.
 ffor þat law lett he noyðt
 9250 bot gart seke on ylka syd.
 Ioab þe nowmber broyðt
and told to hym þat tyde.

But afterwards he committed a great sin in numbering the people, contrary to God's law. For Moses had said that God would take vengeance if the number were known. Joab brought him the number.

772 he told hym of þe kynred ten,
 þat so many were sett in þat syght:
 9255 Aght C milia feyghyng men
 þat ware in armys wyse *and* wyght.
 Of þe kynd of Iuda myðt he ken
 fyfty milia rekynd ryðt;
 Of leuy ware non rekynd þen,
 9260 for þei ware no folke forto fyght.
 ffor orderd all ware þei
 vnto the tempyll at tent
 And for þe pepyll at pray
 þat þei no harme suld hent.

Of the ten tribes there were eight hundred thousand valliant men. Of Judah fifty thousand men were numbered. But the Levites were not counted, for they were not fighting men but ordered to do service in the temple.

S 770. 1 in above the line / 5 Deligam, cf. Pet. Com. ch. XXI / — 772. 1 to hym / 10 a cancelled before tent / 12 no above the line.

L 770. 1 Then / the bible / se / 2 the king / cares cast / Ca. xxij in right margin / 3 sith / playne poste / 4 were ouerpast / 5 Diligam the / 6 this psalme / made / said it / 7 That signifies / shal lufe the / 8 lelely whilst / life / last / 9 With such / 10 honored / 11 faire sacrifice / 12 and as costume then was thore / — 771. 1 afturward / did / 2 that / grete / godes / 3 noumber / 100 / 4 the folk / the law / 5 if / tuke / hede inserted above the line / 6 that nooman shuld noo noumber / 7 godes / doute / 8 that / therfor shuld vengeance thraw / 9 that / lettud / noght / 10 made noumber on ych syde / 11 the noumber broght / 12 that / Ca. xxiiij in right margin / — 772. 1 fol. 161 b / He / to omitted / the kynreds / 2 that samen was set / that / 3 hunderith thovsant fyghten / 4 that were / armes / 5 the kind / myght / 6 thovsant rekynd ryght / 7 leui were noon rekened then / 8 they were noo / 9 ordored / were they / 10 temple to / 11 the people to / 12 that they noon / shuld.

The king repented of his sin and often asked God's mercy. Gad, God's prophet, told him that he could choose one of three things: seven years' war, three years' famine, or three days' pestilence.

- 773 when þis was done, þe kyng sone knew 9265
 þat god was [grieved] in þis degree;
 þat rekynnyng suld hym full sore rew,
and mercy oft sythys asked hee.
 bot gad, þat was goddes prophett trew,
 he sayd hym sone how yt suld bee, 9270
 ffor he had nowmberd so on [n]ew.
 god bad he suld chese on of thre:
 Enmys on sydes sere
 VII zere to were all ways,
 or haue hungur thre zere, 9275
 or pestalence thre days.

David thought it a hard choice. But he trusted to God's mercy and asked for death. So many people died among the twelve tribes that they could not be buried.

- 774 kyng Dauid toyzt here full herd chose, fol. 87 a
 for all þei grathed folke vnto graue.
 full loth he was his land to lose,
and f[ro] hungur hym self myzt he saue. 9280
 And ded, [he] wyst wele, wold not glose,
 ne take reward to knyzt ne knaue.
 And in god con he *grace* suppose;
 þerfor ded asked he forto haue.
 Sone on þe morn was told 9285
 a mang þe kynredes twelfe:
 þe folke dyed so thyke fold
 þat non myzt oþer delue.

Standing in his tower King David saw a strange sight: an angel that smote the people. The king knelt down and prayed to God to cease His vengeance, saying, "Lord, I did all this sin."

- 775 kyng Dauid in his towre con stand, 9290
and sone he saw a selcowth syzt:
 An Angell in þe ayre fleand,
 þat feld þe folk with owtyn fyzt.
 he hasted hym with hert *and* hand
 to saue þe Cyte at all his myzt.
 ffull low he kneled down on þat land, 9295
 wher on he saw þat angell lyzt.
 he prayd to god of heuyn
 to byd þat vengeance blyne,
 And sayd, with sympyll steuyn,
 »lord, I dyd all þis syne. 9300

S 773. 4 letter cancelled before oft / 5 was above wog cancelled / 9—12: cf. the Bible ch. 24: 13 and Pet. Com. ch. XXIII — **774.** 4 for / 5 wyst wele he / — **775.** 4 flyzt / 7 on above in cancelled.

L 773. 1 When this / doone the king / 2 that / grieved / this degre / 3 That rekennyng full sore gun hym rew / 4 sithes / hee / 5 Bot / that / godes prophet / 6 said him / it shuld be / 7 noumbred / new / 8 shuld / oon / 9 sides / 10 sewyn yeres / 11 Or have hunger / yere / 12 pestilence / — **774.** 1 Kyng / thoght / hard / 2 they were folke forto greve / 3 ffull / him / 4 fro hunger him selfe might / save / 5 deid he wist wele / 6 knight / knave / 7 gun / 8 therfore deid / have / 9 the morne / 10 among the kinreds twelf / 11 The / died / thik / 12 that noon myght othre delife / — **775.** 1 Kyng / toure gun / 2 selcouth syght / 3 aungell / the / fliand / 4 that felled the folke withouten fyght / 5 He / with / 6 saue that Cite / all omitted / myght / 7 downe / that lande / 8 where / the aungel light / 9 He / heven / 10 comaund that vengeance blyn / 11 simple steven / 12 lorde / did / the syn.

- 776 þe pepyll vnto þe trespast noyȝt
 þat suffers ded þus sodanly,
 bot I am he þat wrang hath wroyȝt,
 and all þis wo I am worthy.
- 9305 let all þe bale on me be broyȝt
 and spare þem þat ar not gylty.»
 þen god of heuyn, os hym gud toyȝt,
 gaf þem grace and graunt mercy.
 he sent his prophett gad
- 9310 to say what he suld do,
 And euyn os god hym bad,
 he told kyng Dauid to.
- 777 he sayd, »þi myse forto amend
 god wyll þat þou werke on þis wyse:
- 9315 In þe feld, wher þe Angell dyscend,
 þore sall þi ryghtwysnese vp ryse.
 þou sall do make þore with þi hend
 An auter for prayers of price.»
- 9320 In þe same place, ose clerkes haue kend,
 made Abraham fyrst his sacrafyce.
 And sythyn in þat same stede,
 as boke wytnese þerby,
 was iesus done to dede
 and cald þe Mownt of caluery.
- 9325 778 And in þat same place fyrst was fun
 A tempyll folke in forto pray,
 fol. 87^b ffor þe qwylke kyng Dauid hath be gun
 in ylka poynt forto purway
 And sythyn Kyng Salamon his sun
 9330 raysed yt vp in ryȝt aray
 And was cald tempyll of Salomon
 And ȝett is so, os we here say.
 fforther who likes to loke
 how all þat werke was wroyȝt,
 9335 Go to þe bybyll boke;
 þor may þei see vn soght.

Therefore he alone ought to be punished instead of the people who were not guilty. Then God had mercy on them and sent his prophet Gad to tell David what to do.

In the field where the angel had descended David should rear an altar. It was the same place where Abraham first sacrificed and where later Jesus was done to death. It was called Mount Calvary.

It was also the place where the temple was erected, which had been begun by David and was completed by Solomon. He who wants to hear more about it is referred to the Bible.

S 776. 5 om altered to on / 9 And euyn als god hym bad cancelled before he, cf. l. 11 / — 777. 12 Cf. *The Northern Passion II*, EETS 147, p. 64: 3 / — 778. 6 For the introduction of yt cf. Ohlander, *Studies on Coordinate Expressions in Middle English*, Lund, 1936, p. 194 ff. / 12 ȝ cancelled before þei.

L 776. 1 This people / the trispast nocht / 2 that suffred deid thus / 3 Bot / that / has wrought / 4 this woo / 5 Let / the bayle / broght / 6 theym that / gilty / 7 Then / heuyn as / goode thocht / 8 gave theym / graunted / 9 He / prophet Gad / 10 shuld doo / 11 even as / 12 king / so / — 777. 1 He / this mys / 2 wolle that thou wirk / this / 3 the felde where the aungel down descend / 4 there shal thi righthwisnes vprise / 5 Thou shal doo / there / mannes hend / 6 an altare / 7 that / as / have / 8 first / his omitted / sacrifice / 9 sith / that / 10 bokes witnes therby / 11 Was Iesus Doone / deid / 12 called the Mount Caluary / — 778. 1 that / first / fonne / 2 a temple / 3 ffor which king / has begonne / 4 In yche a / purvey / 5 sith kyng Salamon / sonne / 6 it / right array / 7 called Temple Salamon / 8 and yit / as / 9 fforthre whoo / luke / 10 that warke / wrought / 11 Goo / the bible booke / 12 ther / they se vnsoght.

David advised Solomon, his son and heir, to honour God above all things, do His bidding, and duly rule over old and young. He also told his lords to succour Solomon when he himself should be dead.

- 779 And for kyng Daudid had warnyng
by sere exemplys forto see
þat Salamon his sun suld be kyng,
on mony wyse hym warned hee 9340
To honer god ouer all thyng
and to his bydyng bowsom be
And forto gouernd old *and* ȝyng
ylkon dewly in þer degree,
And sayd his lordes ylkon, 9345
fro tyme þat he ware dede,
To socour salamon
at stand furth in his sted.

David now became quite powerless, being of great age and bruised in battles. His body was so cold that he could get no comfort in bed though covered with clothes. The physicians told him to get a young damsel to keep him warm.

- 780 Kyng [Daudid] wex þen all vnweld,
no wounder was *with* owtyrn wene, 9350
ffor he was gone in full grett eld
and bressed in batels þer he had bene.
Of kynd was his *compleccion* keled,
and cold come on hym wonder kene
þat in bed myȝt he haue no beld 9355
for no kepyng *with* cloghes clene.
Physsisiens com hym t[e]ll
be all þe wytt þei wote
þat A ȝong Damsell
ware best to hald hym hote. 9360

Therefore they brought him a sweet maiden, who lay in his arms at night and provided him with heat. There was nothing wrong in that, for he was not fit for pleasure. Longer life was lent him and more strength. The maiden's name was Abishag.

- 781 And sone vnto þat same entent
to hym was soyȝt A madyn swete.
On nyghtes he hyr in armis hent,
and vnto hym scho held gud hette.
In þat maner no myse þei ment, 9365
ffor vnto myrth was he not mete.
Bot lenger lyf was to hym lent
and fuller forse fro face to fete.
þat byrd was not to blame,
for fawt myȝt no folke fynd. 9370
Abysag was hyr name
and comyn of gentyll kynd.

S 779. 5 thynges / 7 gouernd *inverted spelling, cf. 550:4* / —780. 9 tyll / —781. 6 fare *cancelled before ffor.*

L 779. 1 king / 2 ensaamples / se / 3 That / sonne shuld / king / 4 many poyntes / he / 5 honour / thing / 6 bidding / to be / 7 govern / ying / 8 ychoon / their degre / 9 fol. 162 a / Regum Secundo *in upper margin* / He prayd / ychoone / 10 that / were deid / 11 socoure Salamon / 12 to stand / stede / Ca. j *in right margin* / —780. 1 Daudid wext then / vnwelde / 2 noo wondre / withouten / 3 goon / grete elde / 4 batell had he bene / 5 Be kynde / kelde / 6 wondre / 7 That / myght / have noo belde / 8 noo / clothes / 9 Phisisiens gun / tell / 10 by / the wit they / 11 That a yong Damesell / 12 were / hold / —781. 1 that / 2 soght a / 3 hire / armes / 4 she / goode hete / 5 that mater noo mys they / 6 for / 7 life / 8 foullere force / 9 That bird / 10 favte myght noo / fynde / 11 Abisag / hire / 12 comen / kynde.

- 782 he had a sun, heygh Adonay,
 pat fast be gane a fowle debate.
- 9375 To his broþer he had enuy
 pat he suld come to kynges astate.
 he chese to hym grett cheualry,
 qwylke he hoped wold his broþer hate,
 And sayd to þem, »next hayr am I,
 for I am elder, all men wele wate.»
- 9380 Of his assent [þen war]
 fol. 88 a duke Ioab, þat gentyll jew,
 And þe byschop Abyathar
 þat Dauid trest for trew.
- 9385 783 Sadoc neuer to þem assent,
 ne Natan, ne Neomi and oþer ma,
 Bot with kyng Dauid ay þei went;
 so dyd þe kynred of Iuda.
 Adonay to fulfyll his entent
- 9390 [made] a grett fest not fare þer fra,
 And all þat of þat mater ment
 war fayn vnto þat fest to ga.
 And pore assented þei
 all holy to this thyng,
- 9395 In all þat euer þei may,
 þat Adonay suld be kyng.
- 784 when Natan herd þer werkes wyld,
 he went belyue to barsabe
 And sayd, »þi sun sal be begyld
 bot þou hym helpe by red of me.
- 9400 Go tell þe kyng with wordes myld
 how Adonay ordance kyng to be
 And how he heyght vnto þi chyld
 þat non suld haue þe crown bot he.»
- 9405 Scho went and asked þis bowne
 as woman full affrayd,
 And he come aftur sone
 vnto þe kyng and sayd.

David's son Adonijah envied his brother and said that being older he had himself a better right to the throne. He gathered a company of knights to support him, among whom were also Joab and Abiathar.

But Zadoc and others were faithful to David. Adonijah gave a feast for his adherents.

Nathan told Bath-sheba about Adonijah's plans, how her own son was to be beguiled of the crown. She went to the king and Nathan followed soon after.

S 782. 9 *liber ihus Regum* in upper margin | was above the line after assent | 11—12 *These lines inserted in right margin below the preceding line* | — **783.** 6 *frest for fest* | þer cancelled after not | 8 -4 of þat corrected from an f anticipating the following f- of fest | — **784.** 3 *salbe.*

L 782. 1 He | sonne | heygh omitted | Adony | 2 that | began | fowl | 3 brodir | envy | 4 that | shuld | kinges | 5 He | him grete chivalry | 6 suche as he | brothre | 7 said vnto theym | heire | 8 eldre | wele omitted | wote | 9 then wer | 10 the gentyll Iewe | 11 the bishop Abiathar | 12 that | trust | trewe | — **783.** 1 Sadoch | theym | 2 Nathan ne many othre moo | 3 king | they | 4 did the kindred | 5 Adony | fullfyll | 6 made | grete fest noo far therfro | 7 that | that | 8 were fayne | that | goo | 9 ther | they | 10 thing | 11 that | they | 12 that Adony shuld | — **784.** 1 When Nathan | there | wilde | 2 belyve | Barsabee | 3 said thi sonne shal be begylde | 4 thou | be rede | 5 Goo to the king | mylde | 6 Adony ordans king | 7 hight | thy childe | 8 that noon shuld have the | 9 She | this boone | 11 after | 12 the king.

Was it the king's will, he asked, that Adonijah should be king, though God had chosen another? The king was displeased and told Nathan to proclaim solemnly all over the city that Solomon should be king of all the Jews.

- 785 he sayd, »*ser*, [is pis] with þi wyll
 þat Adonay be kyng on dese? 9410
 All yf þou wold þat fare fulfyll,
 þou wot þat god an oþer chese.»
 þe kyng lyked his lesson yll
 and sayd, »Go sone, no lenger sesse.
 Tak Salamon my sun yow tyll 9415
 with all my knyȝtes hym to encrease.
 Rydes through þis Cyte
 and says with solempne crye
 þat salamon sal be
 kyng of all þe jury! 9420

He should be anointed at a well named Gihon. Nathan sent for Zadok to anoint Solomon. Barons, knights and burghesses were also sent for.

- 786 Anoynt hym to þat same entent
 at þe well þat is named Wyon.
 þen Adonay and his conuent
 sall fynd how þat þei fowly fon.»
 when Natan herd how þat he ment, 9425
 he mad no poyntyng þer apon,
 Bot aftur sadok sone he sent
 forto anoynt kyng salamon.
 Barons and knyghtes kene
 þat of þat cowrt ware kende 9430
 And burgeys all be dene
 full sone war aftur send.

They went solemnly through the city, proclaiming everywhere that Solomon should be king. When Adonijah's guests heard the music, they inquired what that might mean. When Solomon had occupied the king's seat, that company fled for fear of being killed.

- 787 Thurgh [oute] þat Cety solemply
 þei went with company full clene.
 At ylke corner gart þei cry 9435
 þat salamon suld kyng be sene.
 when þo þat ete with Adonay fol. 88 b
 herd nakers, trompes and clarions keyne,
 þei sent fast forto spyre and spy
 what all þat melody myȝt be meyne. 9440
 when Salamon was led
 and sett in þe kynges stede,
 þat feleschep fast fled
 for dred forto be dede.

S 785. 1 *ser* / pis is / 2 I Adonay / 11 salbe / — **786.** 10 of þat of þat cowrt.

L 785. 1 He said *ser* is this / thy will / 2 that Adony / king / 3 And if thou / that faire fullfyll / 4 thou / that / oþre / 5 The king liked this / evyll / 6 goo / noo / cese / 7 Take / sonne you vntill / 8 knyghtes him / 9 Rides thurgh this Citee / 10 solenne cry / 11 That Salamon shal / 12 the Iury / — **786.** 1 that / 2 the / that / Gyon / 3 Then Adony / covent / 4 shal fynde / þat omitted / they / 5 When Nathan / all how / þat omitted / 6 made noo / theropon / 7 after Sadoch / 8 king Salamon / 9 Barones / knyghtes / 10 all that of courte was / 11 Burges / bedene / 12 were after / — **787.** 1 Throgh oute that Cite solennly / 2 they / company ful / 3 ych corner made they / 4 that Salamon shuld king / 5 fol. 162 b / When they that / Adony / 6 trumpes / clene / 7 They / spir / 8 that / myght mene / 9 When / 10 set / the kynges / 11 That feliship / 12 fro / deid.

- 9445 788 Duke Ioab þen þat fest for soke
and wüst wele þat þei rudly raue.
 Abhyathar, byschope *with* boke,
 was þen set os a sympyll knaue.
 And Adonay þe *tempyll* toke
 9450 for sewrty so hym selfe to saue.
 he held hym be þe *Auter* noke,
 for þor he hoped his hele to haue.
 Salamon þen he knew
 for his kyng *and* his lord
 9455 And send fast to *persew*
 for frenschep *and* acorde.

Joab then left the feast, and Abiathar, the bishop, was placed as a simple servant. Adoniah took refuge in the temple, where he caught hold of the altar. He acknowledged Solomon for his king and lord, seeking his friendship.

- 789 he sayd he wold amendes make
 for þat wrang þat he had wrought.
 þen salamon for goddes sake
 9460 sayd no vengeance suld be soight;
 bot vnto trews he con hym take
 be þis assent þat he suld noyȝt
 wayte hym *with* more wrangwyse wrake,
 ne do hym dere in ded ne toyȝt.
 9465 So salamon was sett
 in cowrse, os kyng suld be,
 And all ware frendes [mett],
 both his breþer *and* he.

He said he would make amends for all the wrongs he had done. Solomon forgave him on condition that he should not do any more harm.

- 790 Kyng Daud þen full clerly kend
 9470 how þat he chaunged hew *and* hyd.
 his messyngers full sone he send
 to Cety's sere on ylka syd.
 þe lordes þat in his land can lend,
 he bad þei suld not blyn ne byd
 9475 bot hast to hym be for his end
 to here hym tell what suld be tyd.
 þe messyngers ar gone
 þis for ward to fulfyll.
 And sone þei come ylkon
 9480 And þus he told þem tyll.

When David felt that his end was near, he sent for the lords of the land.

S 788. 4 sent for set / — **789.** 11 made / — **790.** 6 bad þat.

L 788. 1 then that / forsoke / 2 that they / rave / 3 Abiathar's bishop / 4 then set as simple knave / 5 Adonay the temple / 6 suerte for hym self / save / 7 He / by the altare / 8 there / helpe / have / 9 then / 10 lorde / 11 sent / pursew / 12 frendship / accorde / — **789.** 1 He / 2 that wrong that / 3 Then Salamon / 4 noo vengeance shuld / soght / 5 Bot / gun / 6 bi this / that / shuld noight / 7 Wate / wronges wrake / 8 doo / dede / thought / 9 Salamon / 10 cours as / shuld / 11 And omitted / All were / mett / 12 brothre / — **790.** 1 then / clerly kende / 2 that / hyde / 3 His messyngers / sende / 4 Cites / ych a syde / 5 The / that / gun lende / 6 þat omitted / they shuld / abyde / 7 Bot / before / ende / 8 shuld betyde / 9 The messyngers / goone / 10 this forward / fullfyll / 11 they / ychoone / 12 and thus / theym vntyll.

He thanked them for their loyalty to him and counselled them to keep together. If they did not, they would soon be destroyed.

791 »sers», he sayd, »þe suthe ze see:
Day of my ded be gynys to draw.
I haue yow gouernyd in degre
lely to lyf after your law,
And ze haue bene gud men to me 9485
and dewly done in dede and saw.
Now wyll [I] consell here þat ze
luf ylkon oþer os ze aw.
yf ze be fast in fere,
foyce sall ze fynd bot foyrn. 9490
And yf ze sonder sere,
sone sall ze be for done.

His son Solomon, the king went on, should be king after him. He begged the lords to be as loyal to Solomon as they had been to himself.

792 with bandes of ded so am I bun fol. 89 a
þat both me fayles flesch and bone.
ze sall haue salamon, my sun,
to gouern yow when I am gone. 9495
And as I haue yow frendly fun,
so, sers, beseke I yow ylkon
þat ze wyll with hym wend and wun
so þat he wax not wyll of wone.
God hath ordand hym kyng, 9500
þerfor I pray yow all
To bow to his bedyng
and com vnto his call.

Solomon would be a wise king and peace would reign. Therefore they should help him to raise the temple that David had already planned. Everything needed for the work was amply provided.

793 he sal be wyse in werld all ways 9505
dewly to deme of euer ylk dede,
And peyse sall be in all his days;
þerfor to helpe hym, sers, take hede
The tempyll of God ryȝt forto raise,
als I haue layd þe lenght and brede. 9510
I haue ordand what so men says
þat of no thyng sall he haue nede.
Of metall, tre and stone
is puruayd grett plente
And werke men full gud wone 9515
to sett in sere degre.

S 791. 8 r cancelled before os / 10 foyrn: see 728:7 / — 793. 1 salbe / 2 or and euer above or, both cancelled before of / euer inserted above the line / 3 sallbe.

L 791. 1 Ca. ij in left margin / Sirres / the soth ye se / 2 day / deth begynnes nere to / 3 have you governed in the degre / 4 lyfe after yov / 5 ye have / goode / 6 devly doone / 7 wolle I counsell you that ye / 8 lufe ychoon othre as yow / 9 If ye / 10 foes shal ye fynde / foone / 11 And if ye sondre sere / 12 shal ye fordoone / — 792. 1 With / deid / bonne / 2 that / flesh / boone / 3 Ye shal have Salamon / sonne / 4 govern you / goone / 5 have you frendly fonne / 6 sirres besech / you ychoone / 7 That ye wolle / wende / wonne / 8 that / will / woone / 9 has / 10 therfor / you / 11 bowe / byddyng / 12 come / — 793. 1 He shal / warld / 2 devly / on euerych / 3 peace shal / 4 therfore / sirres / 5 The temple / god right / rays / 6 as / have / the / 7 have / 8 that / noo thing shal / have / 9 tree / stoonne / 10 purvayd grete / 11 warkmen / goode woone / 12 set / degre.

- 794 he sall fynd all ordand at onys
 so þat no more nedes to be boyȝt:
 Gold enogh ryȝt for þe noyns,
 9520 *and syluer* sall he haue vn soght.
 Besandes, pyrry *and presci*us stonys
 ar plente to þat bygyng broyȝt;
 Swylke welth os sal be in þat wonys
 ayre in þis werld was neuer wroyȝt.
 9525 Both wryghys *and* masons [fyne]
 þerto haue tane þer merkes
 And taylurs of engyne
and Ioners gentyll of werkes.»
- 795 when he had warned þem on þis wyse
 9530 *and* ordand all in gud degree,
 To god þei mad gret sacrafyce
 of bestes *and* gyftes full grett plente.
 And salamon, þat prince of price,
 þen sett þei in his fader see,
 9535 And mad to hym sewt *and* seruyce
and homage, als yt aght to be.
 Kyng salamon mad þat day
 grett fest to folke in fere,
 And þen þei went þer way
 9540 *and perted* to placeys sere.
- 796 þen Dauid in his bed con ly;
 he had no forse to flytt þer fro.
 he cald his sun to byde hym by
and sayd to hym be twyx þem two,
 9545 »Sun, I sall wend heyn in hy
 þe gate þat all our elders go,
 fol. 89 b whor we sall haue, both þei *and* I,
 als we ar worthy, wele or wo.
 þe law þat god hath lent
 9550 loke þou neuer yt for sake,
 And trewly, sun, take tent
 his hows fayr forto make.

Gold, silver and precious stones were brought to the building so copiously that never before had such wealth been used. All sorts of craftsmen were engaged in the work.

After sacrificing to God they set Solomon on his father's throne and paid due homage to him. King Solomon made a great feast for his people.

David, not having strength enough to move, called his son to his bed. He said he was going the way of his ancestors, and charged Solomon never to forsake God's law and to build His house splendidly.

S 794. 7 salbe.

L 794. 1 He shal / all at oones / 2 that noomere / soght / 3 Gold enogh right / the noones / 4 silvere shal / have vnsoght / 5 perry / precius stoones / 6 that bygyng broght / 7 Such / as shal / thoo woones / 8 ere / this ward / wrought / 9 wrightes / fyne / 10 therto has taken there markes / 11 taylers / 12 Iovners / warkes / — 795. fol. 163 a / Regum secundo in upper margin with tertio written in a late hand above secundo / 1 When / theym / this / 2 goode degre / 3 they made grete sacrifice / 4 full omitted / grete / 5 Salamon that / 6 then set they / faders / 7 made vnto / sute / seruice / 8 as it / 9 Salamon made that / 10 grete feste / infere / 11 then they / there / 12 parted / places / — 796. 1 Then / gun / 2 noo force / flit therfro / 3 He called / sonne / abyde / 4 vnto / betwix theym twoo / 5 Sonne / shal wende hens / 6 the / that / oure eldres goo / 7 Where / shal have / they / 8 as / woo / 9 The / that / has / 10 luke thou / it forsake / 11 trevly sonne / 12 faire.

Since God had not allowed David to build His house, it was incumbent on Solomon to bring that work to completion. If Solomon succoured his men with all his might, they would honour and reverence him.

- 797 Sen god wold noyȝt gyf leue to me
 at make his howse *and* haue my med,
 bot sayd þou suld þe maker be 9555
 a[nd] lely lyf his laws to lede,
 And I haue ordand in all degre
 þat specially þe werke may spede,
 layt no defawt be fun in þe
 forto make endyng of þat dede. 9560
 And fand forto socour
 þi men *with* all þi myȝt.
 þen wyll þei þe honowr
and reuerence in all ryȝt.»

David also warned Solomon to beware of Joab and the false bishop Abiathar. Both on them and on Shimei Solomon should take vengeance.

- 798 Also he sayd, »my sun, be ware 9565
 for Ioab þat *with* fals enuy
 Slogh Amasan *and* Duke abnar,
 þe gentylest of all jury;
 þe fals byschope Abathyar,
 þat for soke me for Adonay. 9570
 Take vengeance, dere sun, when þou dare,
 of þem *and* als of Symei
 þat agayns me con com
and dyd me grett dyspyte
 be fore I past þe flome. 9575
 fand þou yt forto qwyte!

But to Barzillai, who had maintained David against Absalom, Solomon should show kindness, or if he himself were dead, to his heirs.

- 799 And, sun, loke þou þat þi fayth be fyne
 to [oon] þat I þen fand my frend.
 þat was þe baron bersylyne.
 when I in þis land durst not lende, 9580
 he maynteyn[ed] þen both me *and* myne
 agayns my sun þat wold me shend.
 And, sun, yf þat he be ded sythyn,
 to þe ayrs of hym loke þou be hend.
 when I was fled *and* flemed 9585
and all þis myrth con myse,
 No socur to me semed
 bot only of hym *and* his.

S 797. 2 'and' cancelled before at / med inserted above the line / 4 G. Stern is probably right in taking lyf as a verb, *Englische Studien*, 59, 1925, p. 281. Cf. 185: 12 and 791: 4. Kalén, p. XIV, supposing the same word omitted in both MSS., takes lyf as a subst.: a lely lyf [by] his laws to lede / 12 all þi / — 799. 2 þem.

L 797. 1 Sith / not gyve leve vnto / 2 to / hous / have / mede / 3 Bot said thou shuld the makere / 4 and lely life his lawes / 5 have / 6 that speciali that warke / 7 Let noo defaute befonne / the / 8 that / 9 And besy the forto socure / 10 thy / thy myght / 11 Then wolle they the honour / 12 gyve reuerence in all right / — 798. 1 sonne / war / 2 that / envy / 3 duke Abner / 4 the gentillest of this Iury / 5 The / Beshop Abiathar / 6 that forsoke / Adony / 7 vengeance / sonne / thou dar / 8 theym / also / Semei / 9 That / gun come / 10 did / grete dispite / 11 Before / the / 12 besye the it / quite / — 799. 1 sonne luke that thi faith / 2 oon that / then / frende / 3 That / the Baron Bercelyne / 4 this / lende / 5 He mayntened then / 6 sonne that / shende / 7 sonne if that / deid syne / 8 the hereys / luke thou / hende / 9 When / 10 all maner of mirth gun mys / 11 Noo socour / 12 only omitted / and of his.

- 800 And hertly, sun, þat þou þe hast
 9590 to helpe all þat of helpe has nede,
 So þat þies wordes be not *in* wast
 þat I haue spokyn here for þi sped. »
 In bandes of ded þen was he brast
 þat vnto hele he toke no hede.
 9595 So vnto go[d] he gaf þe gast
 furt at his lykynng forto lede.
 ffor he of mercy ment
and end in trawth trewly,
 we trow his sawle went
 9600 vnto clene cumpany.
- fol. 90 a 801 þen þe lordes *and* lades dere
and all his meneze grett mornynng makes,
 ffor he was prince *with* outyn peyre
 wher so he past in ylka place.
 9605 god was ay hend hym forto here,
 for yf he spend of myse his space,
 he syghyd euer *with* sympyll chere
 tyll he had graunt[ynng] of [sum] grace.
 whyls he in lyf can lend,
 9610 he ordan ylk thyng,
 Begynnynng, myddes, *and* ende,
 alon to goddes louyng.
- 802 A feller knyght was neuer be fore,
 ne þat fro yre so sone wold slake,
 9615 Ne neuer man gat [so] grett thressour
 as he geydderd for goddes sake.
 Now of hym wyll we make no more;
 on mold he was *with* outyn make.
 Of salamon [werkes] how þei wore,
 9620 sum sall we tell who so tent wyll take.
 And heyre our story twynes
with þe secund boke of kynges,
 And the thryd boke heyre be gynnys.
 god graunt vs gud endyngys!

Then David gave up the ghost. Because he threw himself on God's mercy, we believe his soul went to Paradise.

Lords and ladies mourned over David, a prince without peer. God was gracious to him and he lived to the glory of God.

But let us now turn from that noble knight and speak instead of Solomon's great deeds. Here ends the Second Book of Kings and the Third begins. May God grant us a good ending!

S 801. 8 graunted / — 802. 2 sun cancelled before sone / 3 for / 9 storr, *with o inserted above the line, cancelled before story.*

L 800. 1 sonne that thou the haste / 2 that / 3 that my / noight / waste / 4 that / have spoken / thy spede / 5 bande / deid then / braste / 6 that / heale / tuke noo / 7 god / gave the gaste / 8 furth / likyng / Daudid mortuus est *in right margin* / 10 ended / trewth trvly / 11 We / saul be went / 12 full clene company / — 801. 1 Then the / ladies / 2 men grete mournyng / 3 *with* outen pere / 4 wherso / euerych / 5 God / hende / 6 if / oght on mys / 7 He sighed / simple / 8 to / grauntynng of sum grace / 9 Whilst / lyfe gun lende / 10 ordand ych a / 12 aloonde / godes loveyng / — 802. 1 fellere knight / before / 2 that / ire / 3 man omitted / gate so grete tresour / 4 gedered / godes hous sake / 5 wolle / mell nomore / 6 molde / with-outen / 7 Salamon warkes / they were / 8 sone shal / so omitted / wolle / 9 So here oure / twynnys / 10 the / kynges / 11 third / heyre omitted / begynnys / 12 goode endynges.

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A Middle English metrical
paraphrase of the Old
Testament

